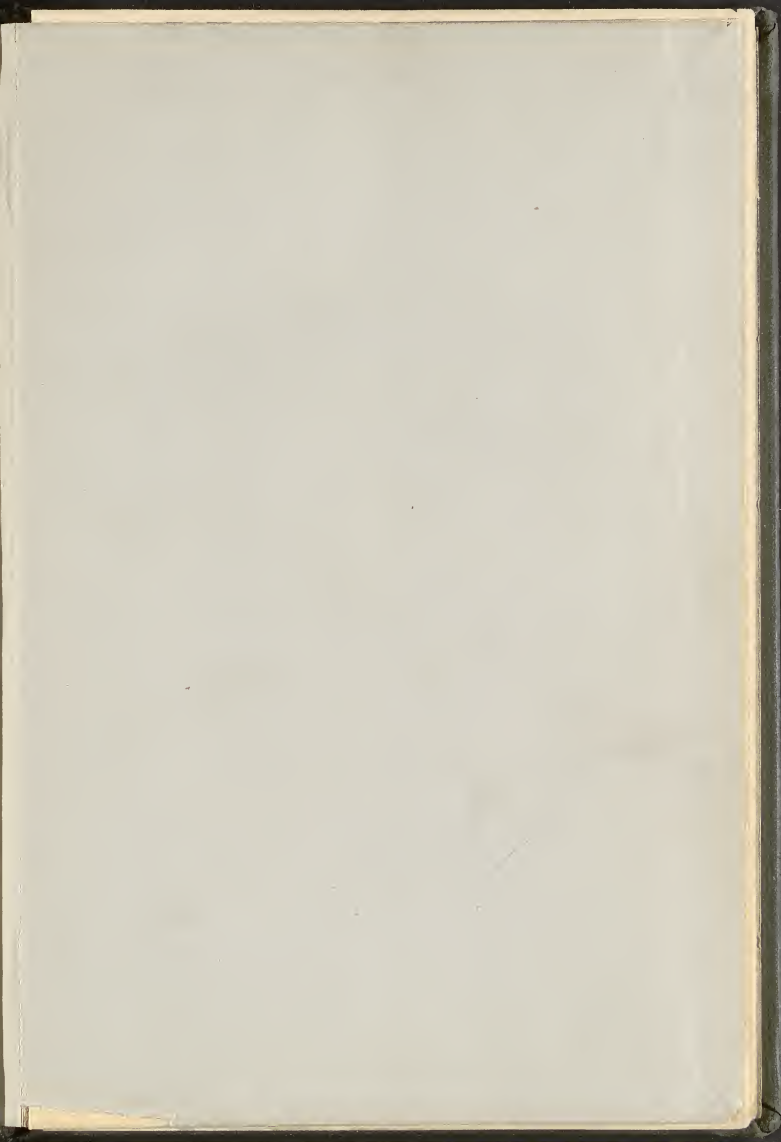


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ROMAN WOMEN OF RANK OF THE
EARLY EMPIRE IN PUBLIC LIFE AS
PORTRAYED BY DIO, PATERCULUS,
SUETONIUS, AND TACITUS

A DISSERTATION
IN LATIN

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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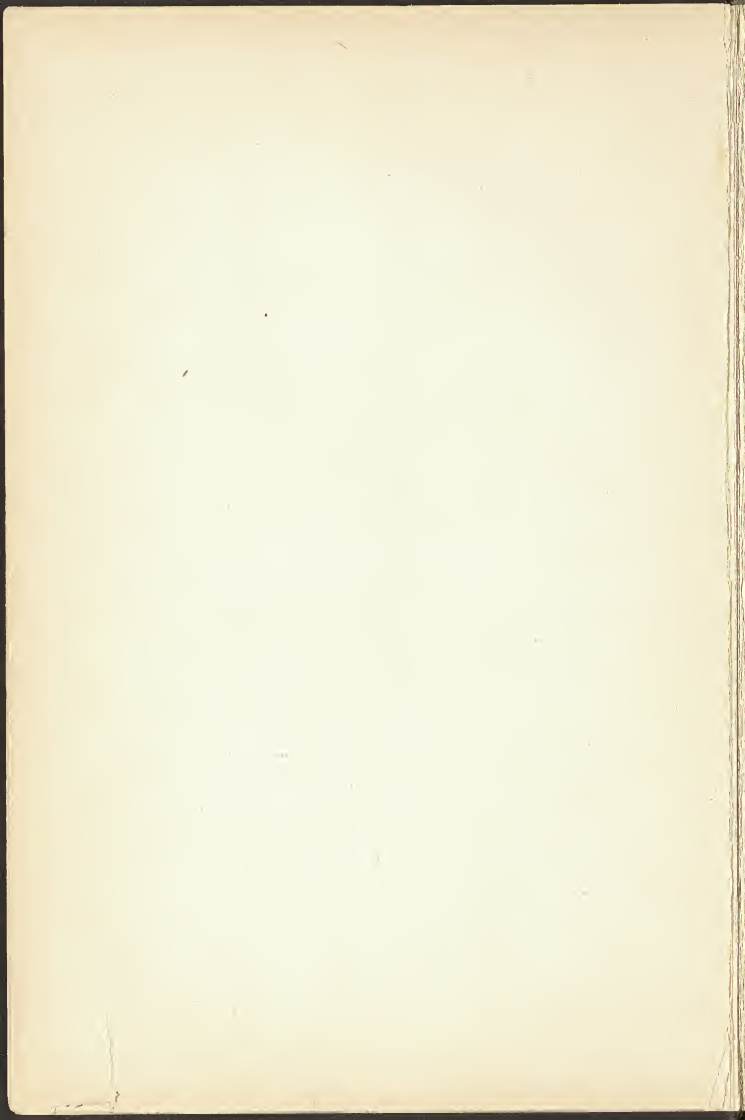
R. B. H.

PREFACE

It has been my purpose in preparing this thesis to present as complete a picture as possible of the women of rank of the Early Empire in their relation to the public life of their day in its political, its social, and its religious aspects. My investigation has been based directly upon the following original sources: the *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία* of Dio, the *Historia Romana* of Paterculus, the *De Vita Caesarum* of Suetonius, and the *Annales* of Tacitus. Paterculus, although he was the closest in point of time to the period under consideration, has yielded comparatively little to our subject.

A thoroughgoing study of the references to outstanding women in the above-named authors shows what a vital part these women played in the Rome of their day. This literary evidence is confirmed by inscriptions, to which I have referred particularly in Chapter V, in my discussion of the political honors which women enjoyed, and in Chapter VII, in my treatment of the recognition which they received in the religious life of the state.

It is my hope that this investigation, bringing, as it does, within the bounds of a single volume, a composite picture of the public activities of distinguished women of the Early Empire, may prove to be of some value.



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- CIA* Corpus Inscriptionum Atticarum.
- CIG* Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum.
- CIL* Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.
- IGR* Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes.
- Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, ed. by B. G. Niebuhr, 33 vols., Bonn, 1828-97.
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AJP American Journal of Philology.

CR Classical Review.

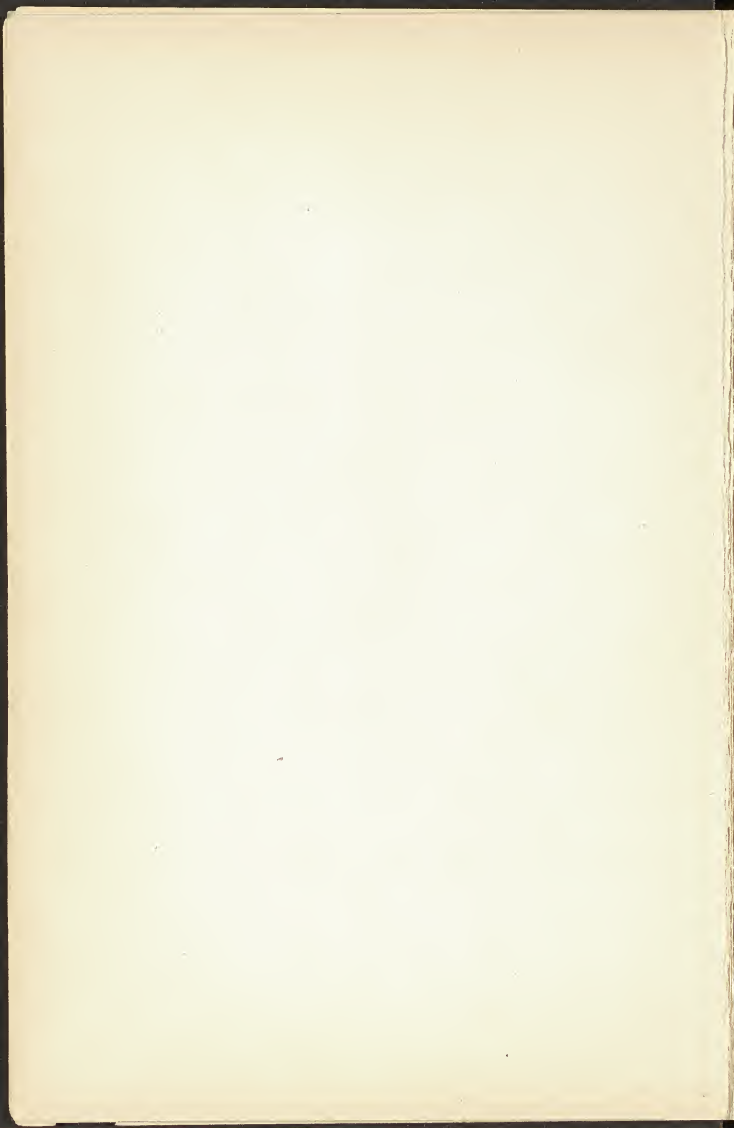
EE Ephemeris Epigraphica.

JHS Journal of Hellenic Studies.

Not. Scav. Notizie degli Scavi.

RA Revue Archéologique.

TAPA Transactions of the American Philological Association.



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INFLUENCE IN POLITICS AT ROME UNDER AUGUSTUS

That the women of rank of the Early Empire wielded considerable political influence is not surprising. Already during the Republican period highborn women had been occupying positions of consequence at Rome. The well-known names of Aemilia, wife of the great Scipio, Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, and Sempronia her granddaughter, Julia, daughter of Caesar and wife of Pompey, Portia, Brutus's wife, and Servilia, his mother, amply attest the fact that women played a significant part in determining the policies of the Commonwealth.

In the period of the Early Empire this tendency on the part of women to interest themselves in public affairs grew apace, and we find women of rank, particularly the members of the imperial household, actually shaping the destinies of the Empire, not only by their subtle influence, but by their actual command of political situations. Impelled, as they were, by various motives such as personal aggrandizement, the advancement of relatives, jealousy, love, fear, and revenge, they employed all the means within their power, and all the agents at their command, to gain their ends. In addition to the imperial ladies, we find occasional mention of the political activity of a woman of the senatorial order, or of a Vestal Virgin. Very rarely do we read of women of the lower classes taking part in political affairs.

It is my purpose, first of all, to review the political activities of all the distinguished women who appear as persons of influence during the reigns of Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, as we find them described in the works of Dio, Paterculus, Suetonius, and Tacitus. In discussing the women who exerted political power during the reign of Augustus, I shall consider his wife Livia, his sister Octavia, Agrippa's sister Polla, and finally the Emperor's daughter Julia, and his granddaughter of the same name.

LIVIA

A survey of the political activity of Livia shows that the primary object for which she exercised her influence during her

husband's reign was the advancement of her son Tiberius to the imperial throne. Her ambitions were temporarily checked when Tiberius in 6 B.C. retired to Rhodes at the height of his success, in spite of her humble entreaties and the complaint which his stepfather expressed in the senate, that he was being forsaken.¹ Various conjectures were made regarding the causes for his retirement, but the chief ones were the conduct of his wife Julia, and the desire on the part of Tiberius to avoid rivalry with his stepsons Gaius and Lucius.² When, later, the request of Tiberius for permission to return to Rome was denied, Livia secured for him the dignity of the title *legatus Augusto* to conceal his disgrace.³ It was undoubtedly largely through her entreaties that Tiberius obtained his recall in the eighth year after his retirement.⁴

Livia's concern about the natural rivals of Tiberius in the succession was considerably relieved by the early death of Marcellus,⁵ of Lucius, and of Gaius.⁶ Whether she was in any way responsible for their deaths is a matter of conjecture.⁷ By exerting to the full her mastery over Augustus, which she herself believed to be foreordained,⁸ she secured the adoption of Tiberius,⁹

¹ Suet. *Tib.* 10.1-2. He had just been invested with the tribunician power by Augustus, who thus made him his colleague (Suet. *Tib.* 9.3; Dio 55.9.4).

² Suet. *Tib.* 10.1, 11.5; Vell. Pat. 2.99.2; Dio 55.9.5-8; Tac. *Ann.* 1.53.2, 6.51.3. Both of these conjectures are accepted by F. B. Marsh, *The Reign of Tiberius*, pp. 37-8. J. C. Tarver, in *Tiberius the Tyrant*, pp. 185-9, inclines toward the first reason, and calls Tiberius's motive heroic. C. Merivale, *History of the Romans Under the Empire*, 4th ed. 206-8 (1871), discounts both reasons, and attributes the retirement to the dark humor of Tiberius.

³ Suet. *Tib.* 11.5, 12.1.

⁴ *Ibid.* 13.2, 14.1; Dio 55.11.3.

⁵ Son of Octavia, sister of Augustus. He died in 23 B.C., two years after his marriage to Julia, daughter of Augustus. Tac. *Ann.* 2.41.5; Dio 53.30.4; Suet. *Aug.* 63.1; Vell. Pat. 2.93.1-2; Plut. *Marc.* 30.10.

⁶ Sons of Julia and Agrippa. They died in A.D. 2 and 4 respectively; Vell. Pat. 2.102.3; Dio 55.10^a. 8-9; Flor. 2.32.42; Suet. *Aug.* 65.1, *Tib.* 23.

⁷ For the suspicion regarding the connection of Livia with the death of Marcellus, see Dio 53.35.4; Dio himself questions it. For the suspicion regarding Lucius and Gaius, see Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.3; Dio 55.10^a. 10. Merivale (*op. cit.*, p. 219) attributes these suspicions to vulgar opinion. Tarver and Marsh make no mention of them.

⁸ Dio 48.52.3-4; Suet. *Galba* 1.

⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.3, 4.57.5: *precibus uxoris evictus sibi Tiberium adscivit*. Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 21.2-3, where, in addition to his wife's entreaties, the good of the state is mentioned as a reason for the adoption. See also *Tib.* 15.2, *Aug.* 65.1; Vell. Pat. 2.103.3; Dio 55.27.4; Sen. *Dial.* 6.15.2.

his partnership in the imperium,¹⁰ his share in the tribunician power,¹¹ and his presentation to all the armies.¹² By these steps she caused Augustus to mark out Tiberius clearly for the succession, securing not only his cooperation, but that of the senate and of the armies as well.

The banishment of Agrippa Postumus¹³ shortly before the death of Augustus is another indication of Livia's ascendancy over the Emperor. According to Dio,¹⁴ she possessed the greatest influence during his reign. We have reason to believe that Augustus was in the habit of discussing matters of state with her. The conversation of considerable length in which Dio represents Livia urging upon Augustus a policy of clemency¹⁵ toward those who have been plotting against him, and his adoption of her suggestion regarding their treatment, even though fictitious, may, in a measure, be considered to show to what extent Augustus took Livia into his confidence and how inclined he was to listen to her advice. His letter to her, discussing the attitude which the imperial household should assume toward the public appearances of the dull Claudius, is further evidence of this inclination, as are also his letters regarding Tiberius.¹⁶ That he gave considerable thought to his conversations with her appears from the statement of Suetonius¹⁷ that Augustus was in the habit of writing out and reading from a notebook the more important conversations even with his wife, for fear of saying too

¹⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.3; Suet. *Tib.* 21.1: ut provincias cum Augusto communiter administraret, simulque censum ageret. Vell. Pat. 2.121.1 defines it thus: aequum ius in omnibus provinciis exercitibusque.

¹¹ Tac. *Ann. loc. cit.*, where reference is made to the bestowal of this power for the second time in A.D. 4. See also Tac. *Ann.* 1.10.7; Dio 55.13.2; Suet. *Tib.* 16.1; Vell. Pat. 2.103.3. For Tiberius's first investment with this power, see note 1 of this chapter.

¹² Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.3.

¹³ The last legitimate heir to the throne, youngest of the three sons of Julia and Agrippa. Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.4; Dio 55.32.1-2; Suet. *Aug.* 65.1.4.

¹⁴ Dio 57.12.3. For Livia's explanation of her influence over Augustus, see Dio 58.2.5.

¹⁵ Dio 55.14.1 to 22.2. This instance of clemency rests upon an invention of Seneca, *Clem.* 1.9.2-3. Dio follows Seneca in misdating the conspiracy of Cn. Cornelius Cinna. See Pauly, *Real-Ency.* 10.370-1.

¹⁶ Suet. *Cl.* 4.1-6, *Tib.* 51.1.

¹⁷ Suet. *Aug.* 84.2.

much or too little if he spoke offhand.¹⁸ We have record of at least one occasion on which Augustus refused his wife's request. She had asked for citizenship for a Gaul from a tributary province. The Emperor, however, objected, offering instead freedom from tribute, and declaring that he would rather suffer a loss in his private accounts than make the distinction of Roman citizenship commonplace.¹⁹

Livia's complete control of affairs upon the death of Augustus²⁰ shows an influence phenomenal in her day. Her recall of Tiberius from Illyricum, her maintenance of a strict guard upon the palace and its approaches, and the favorable bulletins which she issued regarding the condition of the Emperor made possible the announcement at one and the same time that Augustus was dead, and that Tiberius was in possession of the government.²¹

In the account given thus far I have followed the narrative of Tacitus for the most important details, partly because it is clearer and more coherent than that of the other authors whom I have consulted, and partly because the works of Tacitus are considered, on the whole, more authoritative. I find that the point on which these writers are especially at variance is with regard to the circumstances surrounding the death of Augustus. Both Suetonius and Paterculus²² assert that Tiberius was recalled by

¹⁸ Compare the indiscretion of Maecenas, who betrayed to his wife Terentia the secret of the conspiracy of her brother Murena (Suet. *Aug.* 66.3; Dio 54.3.4-5); and of Fabius Maximus, who revealed Augustus's visit to Agrippa Postumus (Tac. *Ann.* 1.5.2; Dio 56.30.1-2) to his wife Marcia, who, in turn, told Livia, with dire consequences to Maximus (Tac. *Ann.* 1.5.3-4). The story of this visit is almost universally discredited. See F. B. Marsh, *op. cit.*, p. 50, fn. For a theory as to how it may have taken shape, see M. P. Charlesworth, "Tiberius and the Death of Augustus," *AJP* 44.155.

¹⁹ Suet. *Aug.* 40.3.

²⁰ For conjectures regarding Livia's responsibility for his death, see Dio 56.30.1-3 (cf. 55.22.2); Tac. *Ann.* 1.5.1; Aur. Vict. *Epit.* 1.29. For the improbability of this story see H. Dessau, *Geschichte der Römischen Kaiserzeit*, 1.477. See also the convincing article by Charlesworth, *AJP* 44.149-50; cf. the same author's "Livia and Tanaquil," *CR* 41.55.

²¹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.5.5-6. Tarver (*op. cit.*, pp. 254-5) maintains that there was no occasion for any plotting on the part of Livia, since Tiberius, by virtue of his tribunician and his proconsular power, was entitled to carry on the government. Cf. Chap. III, note 116. See also F. B. Marsh, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

²² Suet. *Tib.* 21.1, *Aug.* 98.5; Vell. Pat. 2.123.1-2. T. Rice Holmes (*The Architect of the Roman Empire*, p. 140, fn. 2) considers that there can be no better authority than Paterculus on this point. Charlesworth (*AJP* 44.156) accepts the version of Suetonius.

Augustus and that he received injunctions from the Emperor before his death. Dio,²³ however, states definitely that Tiberius was still in Dalmatia when Augustus died, and that the death of the Emperor was not made public by Livia until his return. Tacitus shares Dio's view regarding the postponement of Livia's announcement of the Emperor's death, but says that it was never known whether Tiberius found Augustus alive or dead.²⁴

In summarizing Livia's political activity during her husband's reign as revealed in the authors studied, we should say that her participation in the affairs of state was not so aggressive as it later became under Tiberius. She enjoyed the confidence of Augustus, and exerted over him an influence strong enough to secure for her son his adoption by the Emperor and his partnership in the imperium.

OCTAVIA

Octavia, sister of Augustus, seems, on the whole, to have played an unimportant part politically during the reign of her brother. The death of her promising son Marcellus,²⁵ early in the reign, caused her to live in retirement. She felt especial resentment toward Livia, because it seemed as if the brilliant prospect once in store for her own child was now transferred to Livia's son.²⁶ We read in Plutarch, however, that Octavia was willing to abet the political schemes of her brother by yielding up her son-in-law Agrippa, in order that he might marry Julia, the Emperor's daughter.²⁷ From this same author²⁸ we learn that she also exerted her influence by raising Antonius, son of Antony by Fulvia, high in the Emperor's regard.

²³ Dio 56.31.1.

²⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 1.5.5-6.

²⁵ See note 5 of this chapter.

²⁶ Sen. *Dial.* 6.2.3; for her earlier political activities, see Plut. *Ant.* 31-35, 53. 1-12; App. B.C. 4.32, 5.64, 66, 76.

²⁷ Plut. *Ant.* 87.4: . . . λόγον ἢ Ὀκταουλὰ προσήνεγκεν ὡς χρητὴν τὴν Καίσαρος θυγατέρα λαβεῖν Ἀγρίππαν, ἀφέντα τὴν ἑαυτῆς. πεισθέντος δὲ Καίσαρος . . . Suetonius (*Aug.* 63.1), however, uses the expression *exorata sorore*.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 87.2: Ἀντώνιον . . . οὕτω μέγαν ἐποίησεν ὥστε τὴν πρώτην παρὰ Καίσαρι τιμὴν Ἀγρίππου, τὴν δὲ δευτέραν τῶν Διβίας παίδων ἐχόντων, τρίτον εἶναι καὶ δοκεῖν Ἀντώνιον. To Octavia herself had been granted by Augustus, along with Livia, the right of administering her own affairs without a supervisor, and freedom from fear, and inviolability equally with the tribunes (Dio 49.38.1).

In public works, however, Octavia seems to have been unusually active. The Porticus Octaviae, built ostensibly by her,²⁹ but really by Augustus, and dedicated in her name,³⁰ contained within its enclosure a Bibliotheca³¹ which she erected in memory of the youthful Marcellus, and also a Curia Octaviae,³² and a schola or scholae.³³ The whole is referred to by Pliny as *Octaviae opera*.³⁴ Octavia's lavish recognition of Vergil's praise of her son Marcellus³⁵ marked her as a liberal patroness of literature as well as of art.

POLLA

Agrippa's sister Polla also participated in public works. After her brother's death,³⁶ in accordance with the provisions of his will, she began to build a large porticus in the western part of the Campus Agrippae.³⁷ On the walls of this colonnade, which was named Porticus Vipsania either after Polla, or after the gens Vipsania,³⁸ there was portrayed the map of the world for which Agrippa had gathered information in the latter part of his life.³⁹ The porticus was not yet completed in 7 B. C. Upon the death of Polla, shortly afterwards, Augustus himself finished it.⁴⁰ We are told by Dio⁴¹ that Polla also adorned the race courses.

²⁹ Festus (178.4b *M.*) gives Octavia the credit: Octavia soror Augusti fecit.

³⁰ Suet. *Aug.* 29.4; Dio 49.43.9; Pliny *H. N.* 36.24, 34, 35, 42. This porticus is represented on the Marble Plan. For a full description, see Platner and Ashby, p. 427.

³¹ Plut. *Marc.* 30.11; Suet. *Gramm.* 21; *CIL* 6.2347-9, 4431-3, 4435.

³² Pliny *H. N.* 36.28; Dio 55.8.1.

³³ Pliny *H. N.* 35.114; 36.22, 29.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 34.31; 35.114, 139; 36.15. In these passages Pliny mentions works of art which graced the *opera*. Strabo (5.3.8) pays a tribute to Octavia's zeal in adorning the city: . . . καὶ ὁ Σεβαστὸς . . . καὶ ἀδελφὴ πᾶσαν ὑπερβάλλοντο σπουδὴν καὶ δαπάνην εἰς τὰς κατασκευάς.

³⁵ Verg. *Aen.* 6.861-86; Suet. *Verg.* 32; see also Prop. 3.18 (entire poem); Hor. *Carm.* 1.12.45-8. For her generous reward, see Serv. *ad Verg. Aen.* 6.861: qui pro hoc aere gravi donatus est, id est massis.

³⁶ In 12 B.C. (Dio 54.28.3-5).

³⁷ Dio 55.8.4.

³⁸ Plut. *Galba* 25.5: . . . ἐν τῇ καλουμένην παστάδι Βιψανίᾳ. See also Mart. 1.108.3, 4.18.1; Pliny *H. N.* 6.139.

³⁹ Pliny *H. N.* 3.17.

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ Dio 55.8.4.

JULIA, DAUGHTER OF AUGUSTUS

The part that Julia, daughter of Augustus, played in the political life at Rome during her father's reign was comparatively unimportant, if we may judge from the sources studied. That she did little to encourage confidence in the mind of Augustus regarding Tiberius appears from a statement of Tacitus,⁴² who says that she sent letters to her father deriding her husband. These letters, we are told, were composed by Sempronius Gracchus,⁴³ a paramour, who inflamed her against Tiberius by arousing feelings of arrogance and hatred. Indeed Julia's superior attitude toward Tiberius⁴⁴ and her disgraceful conduct⁴⁵ may well have been contributing causes to his retirement to Rhodes.⁴⁶ Whether or not Julia's relations with the young nobility were a cloak to treasonable plots is not stated, but we are told that one of her lovers, Iullus Antonius,⁴⁷ was put to death on the ground that his conduct had been prompted by designs upon the monarchy.⁴⁸

After Julia's banishment to Pandateria,⁴⁹ three men, Lucius Audasius, Asinius Epicadus, and a slave Telephus, formed a plot involving her. Audasius and Epicadus planned to take Julia and her son Agrippa by force to the armies from the islands where they were confined, while Telephus, who was under the delusion that he himself was destined to rule, was to attack both Augustus and the senate. The plan did not materialize.⁵⁰

The interest of the Roman people, in general, in Julia's restoration is evident from a statement in Suetonius that several times they interceded for her, and persistently urged her recall.⁵¹ We

⁴² Tac. *Ann.* 1.53.5.

⁴³ *Id.* Cf. Vell. Pat. 2.100.5; see also *CIL* 6.1.1515.

⁴⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 1.53.2: spreveratque ut imparerem.

⁴⁵ Vell. Pat. 2.100.3; Suet. *Aug.* 65.2; Dio 55.10.12; Tac. *Ann.* 3.24.2, 6.51.3; Sen. *Benef.* 6.32; Macr. *Sat.* 2.5.9; Pliny *H. N.* 7.150.

⁴⁶ See note 2 of this chapter.

⁴⁷ Son of the triumvir and Fulvia; Dio 48.54.4.

⁴⁸ Dio 55.10.15; cf. Vell. Pat. 2.100.4; Tac. *Ann.* 3.24.2-3. Tarver (*op. cit.*, p. 191) considers it most probable that there was a conspiracy in which Julia allowed herself to be used, prompted by a desire to settle up accounts with Livia. See Pliny *H. N.* 7.149.

⁴⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.53.1; Dio 55.10.14; Suet. *Tib.* 11.4. Agrippina I was banished to the same island; see Chap. II, note 125.

⁵⁰ Suet. *Aug.* 19.2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 65.3; cf. Dio 55. 13.1. Augustus remained obdurate, but lightened the sentence by having Julia removed from the island Pandateria to the mainland.

have reason to believe, however, that Julia died in exile,⁵² in spite of the fact that Dio speaks of her recall from banishment, and makes it appear that it was partly through Julia's influence that Augustus adopted Tiberius, sent him out against the Germans, and granted him the tribunician power for ten years.⁵³

On the whole, so far as Julia's interest in affairs of state at Rome during her father's reign was concerned, we should be inclined to concur with the opinion of Paterculus that she was *per omnia tanti parentis ac viri immemor*.⁵⁴

JULIA, GRANDDAUGHTER OF AUGUSTUS

With regard to Julia, granddaughter of Augustus, it is quite apparent that she, like her mother Julia, was more interested in licentious⁵⁵ and luxurious⁵⁶ living than in the public life of her day. The only mention of her in any political connection is found in a passage in Suetonius, in which he speaks of her husband, L. Aemilius Paulus,⁵⁷ as a ringleader in a conspiracy against Augustus.⁵⁸ Her banishment at an early age⁵⁹ and the long period of her exile,⁶⁰ as a matter of fact, precluded the possibility of any extensive participation in affairs of state.

This survey of the political activity of distinguished women in the reign of Augustus shows Livia as the outstanding figure. We have observed that her influence was due to her strong personal hold upon the Emperor, by reason of which she was able

⁵² Tac. *Ann.* 1.53.3. For her treatment by Tiberius, see Suet. *Tib.* 50.1; *cf.*, however, *ibid.* 11.4.

⁵³ Dio 55.13.1a-2; *cf.* the contradiction in Dio 57.18. 1a. Since both of these passages are from the abridgment of Zonaras, perhaps too much credence should not be given them. E. Klebs (*Prosopographia* 1, part 2) thinks that Livia, and not Julia, is referred to in the matter of the adoption of Tiberius.

⁵⁴ Vell. Pat. 2.100.3.

⁵⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 3.24.2-5; Suet. *Aug.* 65.1.

⁵⁶ Suet. *Aug.* 72.3.

⁵⁷ Son of L. Aemilius Paulus, the censor (Suet. *Aug.* 64. 1), and Cornelia, daughter of Scribonia (Prop. 4.11). He met death on the charge of treason. See *Schol. ad Iuv. Sat.* 6.158.

⁵⁸ Suet. *Aug.* 19.1.

⁵⁹ In A.D. 8 at the age of 23. See Tac. *Ann.* 4.71.6, 3.24.2; Suet. *Aug.* 65.1; Pliny *H. N.* 7.150. The fact that the date of her exile coincided with that of Ovid has caused their names to be associated. See R. S. Rogers, "The Conspiracy of Agrippina," *TAPA* 62.148.

⁶⁰ Until A.D. 28; Tac. *Ann.* 4.71.7.

not only to secure her main objective, the advancement of Tiberius to the throne, but also, in general, to enjoy the confidence of Augustus in matters of great importance to the state. Octavia's power over Augustus seems to be accounted for by Plutarch's statement in *Antony* 31.1: ἔσπεργε δ' ὑπερφυῶς τὴν ἀδελφὴν. Although Octavia was not conspicuously involved in political affairs, as she had been during the Civil War, she still made her influence felt by abetting the policies of Augustus, and by the construction of public works. In this latter field seems to lie Polla's only participation in public affairs. The two Julias, to whom Augustus was in the habit of alluding, along with Agrippa Postumus, as *tris vomicas ac tria carcinomata* (Suet. *Aug.* 65. 4), might very well have greatly influenced affairs of state, if their suspected attempts at conspiracy had been successful.

II

INFLUENCE IN POLITICS AT ROME UNDER TIBERIUS

LIVIA

During the reign of Tiberius, although political influence was exerted to some extent by Antonia,¹ Agrippina I,² Livilla,³ Julia,⁴ and Aemilia Lepida,⁵ the predominating political figure among the imperial women was Livia. According to Dio,⁶ she occupied a very exalted station, far above all women of former days. Her activities under her son's rule began promptly, according to Tacitus,⁷ for he attributes the opening crime of the reign, the murder of Agrippa Postumus, to the joint efforts of Tiberius and Livia, the former moved by fear, the latter by a stepmother's hatred.⁸ With regard to this event, Suetonius says⁹ that Agrippa met his death at the hands of a tribune, who received a letter which commanded him to do the deed. Whether this letter was left by Augustus when he died, or whether Livia had it written in the name of her husband is not known; nor is it known in the latter case, according to Suetonius, whether it was done with or without the knowledge of Tiberius. Dio's version¹⁰ is that Tiberius, immediately after the death of Augustus sent an emissary

¹ Younger daughter of Octavia and Mark Antony, married to Drusus (Suet. *Cal.* 1.1). See note 63 of this chapter.

² Daughter of Marcus Agrippa and Julia, and wife of Germanicus (Dio 57. 5.6; Suet. *Cal.* 7). See note 86 of this chapter.

³ Daughter of Drusus and Antonia, and wife of Drusus, son of Tiberius (Suet. *Cl.* 1.6, *Tib.* 62.1).

⁴ Daughter of Drusus, son of Tiberius, and wife of Nero Caesar, son of Germanicus (Suet. *Cl.* 29.1; Tac. *Ann.* 3.29.4).

⁵ Wife of Drusus, son of Germanicus (Tac. *Ann.* 6.40.4) and great-granddaughter of Augustus (Suet. *Cl.* 26.1).

⁶ Dio 57.12.2.

⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 1.6.2-4.

⁸ Tarver (*op. cit.*, p. 257) thinks it possible that Agrippa's name had been used in the plots with which his sister the younger Julia, and her husband L. Aemilius Paulus had been concerned (*cf.* Chap. I, note 58); or that he had taken up his mother's quarrel with Tiberius, and had disturbed the serenity of the imperial household. For the attitude of Agrippa toward Livia, see Dio 55.32.1-2.

⁹ Suet. *Tib.* 22.

¹⁰ Dio 57.3.5-6.

from Nola and caused Agrippa to be killed, later declaring that this had not been done by his orders, and allowing men to invent their own versions, some of them to the effect that Augustus was responsible, others that it was the centurion who was guarding him, and still others that Livia¹¹ had ordered his death. Paterculus¹² alone of the authors under consideration makes no mention of Livia in this connection.

An incident associated with the murder of Agrippa seems to show that Livia was from the beginning considered the power behind the throne. When the centurion entrusted with Agrippa's assassination reported its accomplishment to Tiberius, and the latter replied that he had given no such order, and that the man would have to answer to the senate for his conduct, Sallustius Crispus¹³ warned Livia that the secrets of the palace, the advice of friends, and the services of the soldiers should not be made public. Tiberius should not weaken the empire by referring everything to the senate. There was no other way of governing an empire except by making everyone accountable to only one person.¹⁴ Livia, believing as she did that she had made Tiberius emperor,¹⁵ was not slow in assuming imperial prerogatives. Except that she never undertook to enter the senate chamber, or the camps, or the public assemblies, she attempted to manage everything as if she were sole ruler.¹⁶ She could at any time receive members of the senate and such of the people as wished to greet her in her house.¹⁷ These levees gave Livia an opportunity, apparently, of knowing the senators quite intimately, for we have

¹¹ For Livia's fear in connection with the visit of Augustus to Agrippa, see Dio 56.30.1-2. Both Tarver (*op. cit.*, p. 258) and Marsh (*op. cit.*, p. 50) disclaim any responsibility on the part of Tiberius for the murder of Agrippa. The former imputes the crime to Livia. Charlesworth (*AJP* 44.156) thinks it very possible that Augustus may have given orders that on receipt of the news of his death Agrippa should be put out of the way.

¹² Vell. Pat. 2.112.7.

¹³ Grandnephew and adopted son of the historian of the same name, and confidant of Augustus and Tiberius. See Tac. *Ann.* 3.30 (entire).

¹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 1.6.5-6.

¹⁵ Dio 57.12.3; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.57.4-5.

¹⁶ Dio 57.12.3; cf. Chap. III, note 125.

¹⁷ Dio 57.12.2. For morning receptions see L. Friedländer, *Roman Life and Manners Under the Early Empire*, 1.⁷ 86-93. See also Suet. *Cl.* 35.1-2, where women and young boys and girls are mentioned among those whom Claudius received.

records which indicate that she used her influence in their behalf. It was through her favor, we are told, that Fufius, the consul,¹⁸ had gained distinction,¹⁹ and it was through her earnest intercession that the senator Q. Haterius, who had offended Tiberius, escaped danger.²⁰ By her influence Otho's grandfather, M. Salvius Otho, who had been reared in Livia's home, became a senator,²¹ while Galba, we have reason to believe,²² owed his power to Livia, and always showed her marked respect.

So far as state letters were concerned, those of Tiberius for a time bore Livia's name also, and communications were addressed to both alike.²³ On one occasion Livia herself, at the suggestion of her son, wrote to Archelaus, the king of Cappadocia, inviting him to Rome, not disguising the offended feelings of her son, but promising clemency if he would come as a suppliant.²⁴ In the matter of decrees Livia had considerable authority. The decrees in memory of Augustus, though nominally sanctioned by the senate, were actually passed by Tiberius and Livia, for when some men proposed one thing and some another, the senators decreed that Tiberius should receive suggestions in writing from them and then select whichever he chose. Dio says that he added the name of Livia because she, too, took part in the proceedings as if she had absolute power.²⁵

The attitude of Tiberius, in general, toward the imperiousness of his mother may be judged from his answer to her when she

¹⁸ C. Fufius Geminus, consul in A.D. 29 (*Inscr. Henz.* 6854).

¹⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 5.2.2; cf. Dio 58.4.5-6. Nipperdey considers that his wife, who is called Πουρλια Πρωτα in the passage in Dio, is the Mutilia Prisca of Tac. *Ann.* 4.12.6, mentioned as an intimate friend of Livia. See note 56 of this chapter.

²⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 1.13.6, 2.33.1.

²¹ Suet. *Otho* 1.1.

²² Suet. *Galba* 5.2; Plut. *Galba* 14.

²³ Dio 57.12.2. This statement of Dio, Marsh points out (*op. cit.*, p. 279), is not confirmed by an inscription found at Gythium (H. Seyrig, "Inscriptions de Gythion," *Revue Archéologique* 29.102). The end of a letter sent by Tiberius to the people of this town reads in this inscription as follows: ἡ μέντοι ἐμὴ μήτηρ τὸθ' ὑμῖν ἀποκρινέται, ὅταν αἰσθῇται πᾶρ' ὑμῶν ἢν ἔχετε περὶ τῶν εἰς αὐτὴν τιμῶν κρίσιν. The people of Mytilene also sent ambassadors to her (IGR 12.2.60, line 29; 58^b, line 24).

²⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 2.42.4; Suet. *Tib.* 37.4; Dio 57.17.3-7. See also Joann. Antioch., Suidas fr. 79^b (*Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, 4.571., ed. by Karl Müller, Paris, 1851).

²⁵ Dio 56.47.1.

urged him again and again to appoint among the jurors a man who had been presented with citizenship. He declared that he would comply only on condition that she would allow a statement to be made in the official record that the action had been forced upon him by his mother.²⁶ Indeed, he frequently warned her not to interfere in matters of major importance which were not within a woman's province, especially when he noticed that she had appeared at a fire near the temple of Vesta and had spurred on the people and the soldiers to assist more strenuously.²⁷ At the very beginning of his reign he had attempted to curtail her power, for when the senate, after the death of Augustus, had been anxious to heap honors upon Livia, he repeatedly said that honors bestowed upon women should be limited, and he would not allow a lictor to be voted to her, or an altar of adoption or other honors of this sort.²⁸ Unlike Augustus, Tiberius avoided frequent meetings with Livia, and refrained from long and intimate conversations with her, in order that he might not appear to be guided by her counsels, although, as a matter of fact, he sometimes needed them and followed them.²⁹

This seems to have been the case when Germanicus died.³⁰ So far as his death is concerned, we are led by Tacitus to believe that Tiberius and Livia were jointly responsible, and that they employed Cn. Calpurnius Piso³¹ and his wife Plancina³² as their agents of crime.³³ The recall of Germanicus from Germany,³⁴ his appointment to a mission in the East,³⁵ the removal of Creticus

²⁶ Suet. *Tib.* 51.1.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 50.3. For similar action on the part of Agrippina II, see Chap. III, note 81.

²⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 1.14.3; cf. Dio 57.12.5.

²⁹ Suet. *Tib.* 50.2.

³⁰ Son of Drusus and Antonia; see Tac. *Ann.* 2.43.6.

³¹ Tac. *Ann.* 2.43.5. For his character, see *ibid.* 2.43.3-4, and Sen. *de Ira* 1.18.3-6: vir a multis vitiis integer sed pravus et cui placebat pro constantia rigor.

³² Called Munatia Plancina in Dio 58.22.5. Furneaux (*The Annals of Tacitus* 1.336, fn. 10) thinks that she is probably a sister of Munatius Plancus mentioned in Tac. *Ann.* 1.39.4. For her character, see *ibid.* 2.43.4.

³³ Tac. *Ann.* 2.71.3-4.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 2.26.3-6. Marsh (*op. cit.*, p. 77) says that a sense of public duty, blended with more personal reasons, perhaps, led Tiberius to recall Germanicus.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 2.43.1-2.

Silanus³⁶ who was closely associated with Germanicus,³⁷ from the command of Syria, and the appointment of Cn. Piso in his place³⁸ form a part of his convincing arraignment.³⁹ Furthermore, Livia's hatred of Agrippina and her friendship with Plancina, on whom she could count to do all that female rivalry could accomplish to harass the wife of Germanicus,⁴⁰ seem to point to the united purpose of Tiberius and Livia of ridding themselves of this powerful pair.⁴¹ Dio,⁴² while he makes no mention of Livia, attributes the death of Germanicus to Piso and Plancina, and implies a connection of Tiberius with the crime. Suetonius⁴³ mentions a belief that his death was caused by Tiberius at the hands of Piso, and also introduces the suspicion of poisoning.⁴⁴ Paterculus⁴⁵ makes only a slight reference to the death of Germanicus.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 2.43.3.

³⁷ *Id.* . . . per adfinitatem connexum, quia Silani filia Neroni vetustissimo liberorum eius pacta erat.

³⁸ Furneaux (*op. cit.*, 1, Intro. p. 140) thinks it reasonable to suppose that Tiberius, mistrusting both Piso and Germanicus, balanced one against the other. Marsh (*op. cit.*, p. 89) feels that Piso was undoubtedly an adherent of Drusus rather than of Germanicus, and that this, combined with his haughty temper, may have appeared to the Emperor as a guarantee of his independence and fidelity. G. Ferrero, in *The Women of the Caesars*, p. 142, says that the account of Tacitus dealing with Germanicus and Piso in Armenia is clouded by an undiscerning antipathy.

³⁹ *Tac. Ann.* 2.43.3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 2.43.5; cf. 1.33.5, and 2.82.2. Tarver (*op. cit.*, p. 351) believes that instructions may very well have been given by Livia to Plancina.

⁴¹ *Tac. Ann.* 2.43.5 and 3.16.1 suggest the possibility that orders were given to Piso regarding the attitude he should assume toward Germanicus. Modern historians are divided on this point. Marsh (*op. cit.*, p. 93, fn. 1) is of the opinion that there were secret orders of some sort from Tiberius. W. Liebenam ("Bemerkungen zur Tradition über Germanicus," in *Neue Jahrbücher für das Klassische Altertum*, 143.870-2) and J. P. Balsdon (*Gaius*, p. 8) disbelieve in the instructions altogether, while J. V. Duruy (*History of Rome and of the Roman People*, 4.310), J. C. Tarver (*op. cit.*, p. 349), and A. Domaszewski (*Geschichte der Römischen Kaiser*, 1.280-1) think that Piso misunderstood his instructions. The last mentioned writer considers the misunderstanding "die Ausgeburt des weiblichen Hasses, der Pisos Weib und Agrippina verfeindet hatte."

⁴² Dio 57.18.6, 9-10; see also 58.22.5.

⁴³ *Suet. Tib.* 52.3.

⁴⁴ *Suet. Cal.* 1.2. It is now generally believed that the death of Germanicus was due to natural causes. For the collapse of the poisoning charge, see Merivale⁵ 5.82-3 (1872). J. Wolf, in *Römische Kaiserzeit*, p. 55, opposes the idea of the responsibility of Tiberius. This opinion is shared by Balsdon, p. 8; Merivale, p. 87; Marsh, p. 102; and Tarver, p. 349, in the works already mentioned; and also by E. F. Albertini, *L'Empire Romain*, p. 65.

⁴⁵ *Vell. Pat.* 2.130.3. In 2.129.3 there is implied a very friendly feeling for Germanicus on the part of Tiberius.

Not only did Livia concern herself with the affairs of the court, both domestic and foreign; she took an active interest in public works as well.⁴⁶ The temple decreed to Augustus was built jointly by her and Tiberius.⁴⁷ On a statue which she herself erected to the Deified Augustus, she had her own name inscribed above that of Tiberius.⁴⁸ This act seems to confirm the statement of Dio⁴⁹ that Livia was not satisfied to rule on equal terms with Tiberius, but even wished to rank above him. Among Livia's other public works were the Aedes Concordiae, which was connected with the Porticus Liviae, but was probably outside the enclosure,⁵⁰ and a Columbarium Liviae, which was erected for her slaves and freedmen and contained three thousand urns.⁵¹ Livia's interest in public life at Rome further manifested itself in the assistance which she rendered to victims of various conflagrations,⁵² and in the help which she extended to members of the senate by rearing the children of many of them, by the partial payment of their daughters' dowries, and by saving the lives of several of them.⁵³ In her will she left generous bequests to the public.⁵⁴ Paterculus⁵⁵ calls her a woman pre-eminent among women, one who in all things resembled the gods more than mankind, and whose power was exerted only for the alleviation of trouble or the promotion of rank.

⁴⁶ Strabo 5.3.8.

⁴⁷ Dio 56.46.3; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 6.45.2.

⁴⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 3.64.2. The *Fasti Praenestini* give (with the date) the fact, and the locality of this dedication, and place the names in this order, thus apparently following the original inscription. See Orelli 2, p. 388: DIVO. AUGUSTO. PATRI. AD THEATRUM. MAR. JULIA. AUGUSTA. ET TI. AUGUSTUS DEDICARUNT.

⁴⁹ Dio 57.12.3; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.57.4-5; Suet. *Tib.* 50.2. Dio (57.12.6) considers that it was chiefly on Livia's account that Tiberius retired to Capreae.

⁵⁰ Ovid *Fasti* 6.637-8: Te quoque magnifica, Concordia, dedicat aede/Livia, quam caro praestitit ipsa viro. These lines are followed by a description of the Porticus Liviae (see Chap. V, note 71), and it is probable therefore that the temple was close to or within the Porticus. See Platner and Ashby, p. 423. There is no other known reference to the temple.

⁵¹ This structure was discovered near the Porta Appia in 1726 in perfect condition, but it has since perished. See Daremberg and Saglio, s.v. *Columbarium*.

⁵² Dio 57.16.2; see note 27 of this chapter.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 58.2.3. Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.71.7 for her treatment of Julia, granddaughter of Augustus, while she was in exile: viginti annis exilium toleravit Augustae ope sustentata.

⁵⁴ Dio 59.2.4. These bequests, disregarded by Tiberius (Suet. *Tib.* 51. 2, *Galba* 5.2), were paid by Caligula (Suet. *Cal.* 16.3).

⁵⁵ Vell. Pat. 2.130.5.

In connection with Livia mention should be made of the influence exerted by some women of rank by reason of their friendship with her. Mutilia Prisca,⁵⁶ who stood high in her favor, succeeded by means of an intrigue with a skilled slanderer, Julius Postumus, in effecting a complete estrangement between Livia and Agrippina I.⁵⁷ The activities of Plancina, wife of Cn. Piso and an intimate friend of Livia, have been mentioned in connection with the death of Germanicus.⁵⁸ Urgulania, who was also on friendly terms with Livia, was so powerful, we are told, that when summoned as a witness in a case which was being tried before the senate, she haughtily refused to appear. A praetor was sent to question her in her own home. This was an unusual concession, for even Vestal Virgins, when they gave evidence, had to appear in open court.⁵⁹ Later, when her grandson Plautius Silvanus was on trial, and a decision had been rendered, Urgulania sent him a dagger. On account of Livia's friendly relations with Urgulania this act was equivalent to a hint from the Emperor himself that Silvanus should commit suicide.⁶⁰

The extent of the political influence which Livia exerted during the reign of Tiberius may be comprehended from the statement of Tacitus that upon her death there followed a period of stern and burdensome tyranny. As long as she was alive there was still a refuge open, for Tiberius had a deep-rooted regard for his mother, and even Sejanus did not dare to oppose her authority.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Probably the wife of Fufius Geminus; see notes 18 and 19 of this chapter.

⁵⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 4.12.6.

⁵⁸ See note 40 of this chapter.

⁵⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 2.34.3-8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 4.22.3.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 5.3.1; cf. 6.51.6, where Tacitus speaks of Tiberius as *idem inter bona malae mixtus incolumi matre*. For the political activities of Sejanus (pretorian prefect under Tiberius, Tac. *Ann.* 1.24.3) in connection with the imperial ladies, see under Agrippina I, Livilla, Julia, and Aemilia Lepida in this chapter.

The consensus of opinion regarding the character of Tiberius among the classical writers previous to Tacitus seems, in general, to have been hostile. For an illuminating article on the growth of the tradition concerning this Emperor, see G. A. Harrer, "Tacitus and Tiberius," *AJP* 41.57-67. Among modern historians E. S. Beesly (*Catiline, Clodius, and Tiberius*, pp. 138-48) and S. Baring-Gould (*The Tragedy of the Caesars*, pp. 310-82) are thoroughgoing in their defense of Tiberius, while Tarver goes to extremes. Merivale (54.259-61) gives a very fair estimate.

In summarizing Livia's political activities during her son's rule, we find that, for the most part, she was motivated both by a jealous regard for her son's power, and by a desire for self-aggrandizement. The former impulse was responsible, if we may believe the account of Tacitus, for the removal of Agrippa Postumus and of Germanicus. The latter encouraged her to assume imperial authority and to participate actively in the affairs of state, including reception of the senate and of the people, appointments, promotions, decrees, state letters, public works, and public charities. In the words of Tacitus, Livia was *comis ultra quam antiquis feminis probatum, mater impotens, uxor facilis et cum artibus mariti, simulatione filii bene composita*.⁶²

ANTONIA

Livia's daughter-in-law, Antonia,⁶³ held a position of importance in the affairs of state during the reign of Tiberius, although her efforts were far less obtrusive than Livia's, and were prompted in no sense by a desire for personal advancement. She was known far and wide for her discretion and her beauty.⁶⁴ Augustus had considered her worthy of sharing his confidence along with Livia in regard to the official appearances of her awkward son Claudius.⁶⁵ He had also urged her to remarry after the death of her husband Drusus, but she preferred to remain loyal to his memory and to spend her days in comparative retirement.⁶⁶ So far as we know, she took no part in the public proceedings upon the death of her son Germanicus. Whether she was prevented by ill health, or by excessive grief, or by the constraining influence of Tiberius and Livia, who also made no appearance, is

⁶² Tac. *Ann.* 5.1.5. Modern historical criticism of Livia is, on the whole, favorable. See Merivale, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-3. Tarver, however, is inclined to paint Tiberius in bright colors at Livia's expense.

⁶³ See note 1 of this chapter; see also Suet. *Cl.* 1.6; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.6.6; Scrib. Larg. 271. Her sister, the elder Antonia, is erroneously called Minor in Tac. *Ann.* 4.44.3, and 12.64.4.

⁶⁴ Plut. *Ant.* 87.6.

⁶⁵ Suet. *Cl.* 4.4. Antonia, as well as Octavia, his grandmother, exercised censorship over a history which Claudius wrote (*ibid.* 41.2; see also Dio 60.2.1).

⁶⁶ Val. Max. 4.3.3: *amorem mariti egregia fide pensavit*. See also Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.6.6.

uncertain.⁶⁷ Whatever Antonia's feelings were regarding the death of Germanicus, she seems at all times to have been on friendly terms with her brother-in-law Tiberius. Josephus⁶⁸ gives her the credit for revealing to the Emperor the plot which Sejanus had formed against him.⁶⁹ A letter containing an exact account of the whole matter was entrusted to Pallas,⁷⁰ the most faithful of her servants, and carried by him to Capreae. Josephus comments that Tiberius, who had held Antonia in great esteem before, now looked upon her with still greater respect and depended upon her in all things. So great was the Emperor's regard for Antonia, according to an opinion quoted by Dio,⁷¹ that Tiberius spared the life of her daughter Livilla, even when he found her guilty of the murder of his son Drusus.

Antonia's influence on the young Caius was undoubtedly far-reaching. Her home, into which he was taken after the death of Livia,⁷² opened up to him associations with the ruling houses of the native states of the East⁷³ and no doubt fostered in his mind the ideas of tyranny which marked his reign. Antonia's house was doubtless also a political and social centre for Romans of distinction. Vitellius and Valerius Asiaticus, we are told, esteemed her highly.⁷⁴ The obsequiousness of Vitellius must

⁶⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 3.3.2-3. Merivale (54.75) attributes Tiberius's failure to appear to his detestation of all outward show, and also to his obstinacy, which forbade him to yield to the expectations of the people. Compare his attitude on the occasion of the death of his son Drusus. Seneca (*Dial.* 6.15.2) says: *non flexit voltum*. See, however, Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.6.1.

⁶⁸ Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.6.6. For further references to the conspiracy, see Tac. *Ann.* 5.8.1, 6.8.11, 14.1; Suet. *Tib.* 65.1-2; Dio 58.8.2-3; Juv. 10. 69-77. The plot appears to have been revealed to Antonia by Satrius Secundus (Tac. *Ann.* 6.47.2); see Furneaux, *The Annals of Tacitus*, 1.652. fn. 15.

⁶⁹ See note 61 of this chapter.

⁷⁰ For his later important career, see Chap. III, under MESSALINA and AGRIPPINA II. The letter was written by Antonia's amanuensis, Caenis, who later became the favorite of the Emperor Vespasian. See Dio 66.14.1-2; Suet. *Vesp.* 3.

⁷¹ Dio 58.11.7; cf. Suet. *Tib.* 62.1. Dio's own opinion is that Livilla was put to death by Tiberius. Livilla's activities will be described later in this chapter.

⁷² Suet. *Cal.* 10.1, 24.1.

⁷³ Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.6.1. Antonia's palace, with its traditions of her father Antony was a natural meeting place for such rulers. See H. F. Pelham, *Essays on Roman History*, p. 38.

⁷⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 11.3.1. L. Vitellius, consul A.D. 34 and 43 (Dio 58. 24.1, 60.21.2), and P. Valerius Asiaticus, *consul suffectus* A.D. 46 (Dio 60.27.1), will be treated further in connection with Messalina.

have been a great encouragement to the arrogance of the young prince.⁷⁵ We have reason to believe that Antonia received many rebuffs from her grandson. Once when she asked for a private interview with him, he refused to grant it except in the presence of Macro;⁷⁶ and on another occasion when she gave him some advice, he was not satisfied merely not to listen, but replied, *Memento omnia mihi et in omnis licere*.⁷⁷

Antonia's power was especially marked in the case of the young Agrippa,⁷⁸ son of Berenice⁷⁹ and grandson of Herod the Great, who was imprisoned by Tiberius because of his remark, "Would that this old fellow would die and leave the government to Gaius."⁸⁰ Although Antonia realized the futility of intercession with Tiberius, yet by her influence she secured some generous concessions from the prefect Macro, which greatly eased Agrippa's position.⁸¹ Upon the death of Tiberius, although Gaius was disposed to set Agrippa free on the very day of the funeral, Antonia hindered him. She was afraid that when the people saw how quickly he released the man whom the Emperor had imprisoned they would feel that Gaius was pleased with the death of Tiberius.⁸² Gaius's appointment of Agrippa as King of the Tetrarchy of Philip shortly after this⁸³ was no doubt largely due to Antonia's influence.

Early in the reign of Gaius, Antonia was forced to seek death by her own hand,⁸⁴ or according to some opinions, was poisoned by the Emperor himself.⁸⁵

⁷⁵ Suet. *Vit.* 2.5; Dio 59.27.6; Tac. *Ann.* 6.32.7: Vitellius exemplar apud posteros adulatorii dedecoris habetur.

⁷⁶ Suet. *Cal.* 23.2.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 29.1.

⁷⁸ Agrippa was brought up and educated at Rome with Drusus, Tiberius's son, and with Claudius (Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.6.1, 4), and developed a strong feeling of friendship for Gaius (*ibid.* 18.6.5: προίσιος της δὲ εἰς μέγα τῷ Ἀγρίππᾳ τῆς πρὸς Γάϊον φιλίας).

⁷⁹ Of the relationship between Antonia and Berenice, Josephus (*op. cit.*, 18.6.4) says: σφόδρα ἀλλήλαις ἐχρῶντο αἰδε γυναῖκες.

⁸⁰ Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.6.5; Dio 59.8.2.

⁸¹ Jos. *Ant. Jud.*, *op. cit.*, 18.6.6-7.

⁸² *Ibid.* 18.6.10.

⁸³ *Id.*

⁸⁴ Dio 59.3.6.

⁸⁵ Suet. *Cal.* 23.2. The recently discovered fragment of the *Fasti Ostienses*, published by G. Calza in the article "Ostia" in *Not. Scav.* 14.182, gives (in lines 20-1) the Kalends of May as the date of Antonia's death, a fact which was unknown before this discovery.

In reviewing the political influence of Antonia, we are impressed primarily by her unselfish loyalty to Tiberius, which was not only instrumental in saving his life, but which also encouraged him to depend upon her judgment in all things. We note, too, that Antonia, by her associations with Eastern rulers, was responsible, in no small measure, for the deepening at Rome of the oriental spirit of flattery and servility, which fostered the arrogance of her grandson Gaius, and helped to destroy the independent spirit of the Roman people.

AGRIPPINA I

Agrippina I⁸⁶ became significant in the political life at Rome during the reign of Tiberius. Under Augustus, who showed her particular attention and attachment,⁸⁷ she was not involved in public affairs; but upon the death of Germanicus, five years after the accession of Tiberius, she became a disturbing figure politically at Rome.⁸⁸ The storm of enthusiasm⁸⁹ with which she was greeted on her return from Syria with the ashes of her husband⁹⁰ made a deep impression on Tiberius.⁹¹ The epithets which men heaped upon her, *decus patriae*, *solum Augusti sanguinem*, *unicum antiquitatis specimen*, were disturbing, as were also their prayers that her offspring might be preserved, and that they might survive their enemies.⁹² The words, *Redde Germanicum*, posted in many places and shouted at night all over the city,⁹³ increased the Emperor's anxiety. Had Agrippina

⁸⁶ See note 2 of this chapter. See also *CIL* 6.886, 31281, 32346; *IGR* 3.94, 716; 4.980.

⁸⁷ *Suet. Aug.* 64.2, 86.3, *Cal.* 8.4.

⁸⁸ For her influence abroad, see Chap. IV, under WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE PROVINCES.

⁸⁹ *Cf. Tac. Ann.* 2.75.1: Agrippina inter venerantis gratantisque aspicì solita.

⁹⁰ *Tac. Ann.* 3.1.2. For the popularity of Germanicus, see *ibid.* 2.72.2-3; 73.2-3; *Dio* 57.18.6-8; *Suet. Cal.* 3.1: Germanico contigisse satis constat conciliandae hominum gratiae ac promerendi amoris mirum et efficax studium. See also *Suet. Cal.* 4-6. Marsh (*The Reign of Tiberius*, p. 77, fn. 2) says that Tacitus, Dio, and Suetonius have probably exaggerated the popularity of Germanicus, but that it was doubtless real nevertheless.

⁹¹ *Tac. Ann.* 3.4.3: Nihil Tiberium magis penetravit quam studia hominum accensa in Agrippinam.

⁹² *Id.*

⁹³ *Suet. Tib.* 52.3.

followed the advice of her dying husband, *exueret ferociam, saevienti fortunae submitteret animum, neu regressa in urbem aemulatione potentiae validiores inritaret*,⁹⁴ the outcome might have been far different; but being by nature *aequi impatiens, dominandi avida*,⁹⁵ she increased the uneasiness of the suspicious Tiberius.⁹⁶ Her ill-concealed exultation over the popular favor⁹⁷ shown to her and to her children after the death of Drusus,⁹⁸ the only son of Tiberius, precipitated disaster.⁹⁹ Sejanus, the minister of Tiberius,¹⁰⁰ who was bent on the destruction of the family of Germanicus,¹⁰¹ aroused the old animosity of Livia,¹⁰² and through the efforts of informers, among whom was Julius Postumus,¹⁰³ he succeeded in charging Agrippina with aiming at the sovereignty.¹⁰⁴ He subsequently complained to the Emperor¹⁰⁵ that the state was divided into two factions as if in civil war, and that there were some who called themselves the party of Agrippina. He declared that if they were not resisted, they would increase; there was no other remedy for the growing discord except for one party or the other to be overthrown as quickly as possible.¹⁰⁶

The steps taken to achieve this end included, on the one hand, an attempt on the part of Sejanus to strengthen his own position and prospects by requesting permission from Tiberius to marry

⁹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 2.72.1. H. Stadelmann, in *Messalina*, p. 178, says that Agrippina maintained her groundless accusation of the poisoning of Germanicus because this was the most powerful weapon that she and her adherents could wield in support of her claims to the empress's throne.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 6.25.3.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 4.17.2: Tiberius haud umquam domui Germanici mitis. Cf. Dio 57.6.3.

⁹⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 4.12.1: domum Germanici revirescere occulti laetabantur.

⁹⁸ See note 130 of this chapter.

⁹⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 4.12.2.

¹⁰⁰ See note 61 of this chapter.

¹⁰¹ Tac. *Ann.* 4.12.3; cf. *ibid.* 1.69.6. See also Dio 57.22.4^b, and Suet. *Tib.* 55.

¹⁰² Tac. *Ann.* 4.12.5. See note 40 of this chapter.

¹⁰³ See note 57 of this chapter.

¹⁰⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 4.12.5: subnixam popularibus studiis inhiare dominationi. See R. S. Rogers, "The Conspiracy of Agrippina," *TAPA* 62 (1931), pp. 141-68.

¹⁰⁵ The occasion for the complaint seems to have been the association of the names of Nero and Drusus, sons of Agrippina, with that of Tiberius when annual vows were offered to the Emperor in A.D. 24 (Tac. *Ann.* 4.17.1-3; Suet. *Tib.* 54.1.). Balsdon (*The Emperor Gaius*, p. 10) says that this was a piece of impertinence in which we can trace, as Tiberius did, the hand of Agrippina and her misguided friends.

¹⁰⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 4.17.4.

Livilla, the widow of Drusus,¹⁰⁷ and, on the other hand, a determined effort to destroy Agrippina and her sons. His futile request for the hand of Livilla showed Sejanus how much importance Tiberius attached to the animosity of Agrippina. The marriage of Livia, in the opinion of the Emperor, would only increase the bitterness of that enmity, and would, as it were, rend in two the house of the Caesars.¹⁰⁸ In the second part of his plan Sejanus was eventually successful. The attacks upon C. Silius¹⁰⁹ and Titius Sabinus,¹¹⁰ staunch friends of Germanicus¹¹¹, and upon Sosia Galla,¹¹² wife of Silius and a friend of Agrippina,¹¹³ and upon Claudia Pulchra, Agrippina's cousin,¹¹⁴ were simply forerunners of the destruction of Agrippina and her sons Nero and Drusus.

We get an insight into the Emperor's suspicious attitude toward his stepdaughter in the question which he put to her when she remonstrated against the accusation of Claudia.¹¹⁵ "Do you think," he asked, "that a wrong is done you, dear daughter, if you are not empress?"¹¹⁶ The failure of Tiberius to give any answer when Agrippina asked him for permission to remarry¹¹⁷ was another indication of his fear of her political ambitions. The seeds of suspicion, sown in the heart of Agrippina by Sejanus through emissaries sent to warn her of poisoning at the hands of

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 4.39.1-6; see note 136 of this chapter.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 4.40.3.

¹⁰⁹ *Tac. Ann.* 4.18, 19; Silius anticipated the inevitable sentence by voluntary death. Merivale (54.180) thinks that he was perhaps not wholly innocent. For his relationship to Germanicus, see Chap. III, note 64.

¹¹⁰ *Tac. Ann.* 4.68-70; see also 4.18, 19. *Cf.* Dio 58. 1^b, 2-3.

¹¹¹ *Tac. Ann.* 4.18.1.

¹¹² *Ibid.* 4.19.4, 20.2.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* 4.19.1.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* 4.52.1-2, 6. This relationship is explained (Furieux, *op. cit.*, Intro. vol. 1, 9, note 18) on the supposition that Claudia's father (adoptively named M. Valerius Barbatus Appianus) was the son of Appius Claudius Pulcher, and that her mother was Marcella maior. For the Marcellae, see *Suet. Aug.* 63.1; *Inscr. Henz.* 5373-74. Lipsius is unable to trace Claudia's origin, and her affinity with Agrippina.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* 4.52.5-6.

¹¹⁶ *Suet. Tib.* 53.1; *cf.* *Tac. Ann.* 4.52.6. The sentiment resembles the saying of Jason of Pherae: *πεινὴν ὄρε μὴ τυραννοῖ* (*Arist. Pol.* 3.2.6).

¹¹⁷ *Tac. Ann.* 4.53.1-3. This account, according to Tacitus, was taken from the memoirs of Agrippina II. See Agrippinae Claudii *Commentarii* (in H. Peter, *Historicorum Romanorum Reliquiae*, 2.94).

Tiberius,¹¹⁸ widened the gap between her and her stepfather,¹¹⁹ while the persistent scheming of the minister against both Agrippina and her sons Nero and Drusus¹²⁰ gradually led to their condemnation and death.¹²¹

It is significant that Tiberius did not send his letter of denunciation of Agrippina and her son Nero to the senate until after the death of Livia.¹²² We notice, too, that in the words of studied severity with which he accused Agrippina, there was no charge of treason, but merely the accusation of an arrogant tongue and a stubborn spirit.¹²³ The postponement of action on the part of the senate, and the demonstration of the populace who surrounded the senate house, and paraded effigies of Agrippina and Nero,¹²⁴ thus attesting their continued popularity, led Tiberius to take extreme measures.¹²⁵

We see that although Agrippina did not actually participate in state affairs at Rome in the sense in which Livia did,¹²⁶

¹¹⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 4.54.1.

¹¹⁹ Suet. *Tib.* 53.1; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.54.2-4.

¹²⁰ Dio 57.22.4^b; Tac. *Ann.* 4.59.5, 60.1-6, 67.6. For Tiberius's attitude, see Suet. *Tib.* 52.3, 53.2, 54.2. The position of Gaius still seemed unassailable (Dio 58.8.1).

¹²¹ According to Suetonius (*Tib.* 55), Tiberius had advanced Sejanus to the highest power *ut esset cuius ministerio ac fraudibus liberos Germanici circumveniret, nepotemque suum ex Druso filio naturalem ad successionem imperii confirmaret*. Compare *Tib.* 61.1, where Tiberius is quoted as saying that he had punished Sejanus *quod comperisset furere adversus liberos Germanici filii sui*. It seems difficult to agree with Tarver, who says (*op. cit.*, p. 411) that there is no reason to doubt the honesty of this latter statement, although the events which followed have rendered it suspect. See Dio 58.22.4-5, and also note 125 of this chapter.

¹²² Tac. *Ann.* 5.3.2.

¹²³ *Ibid.* 5.3.3-4; cf. later charge in 6.25.2; see also Suet. *Tib.* 53.2, and note 104 of this chapter.

¹²⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 5.4.1-3. See Chap. III, note 165.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.4.5, 5.5.1-2. For the fate of Agrippina, see Suet. *Tib.* 53.2; Tac. *Ann.* 6.25.1-5. The place of her exile was Pandateria, the island to which Julia, daughter of Augustus, was relegated. See Chap. I, note 49. For the fate of Nero, see Suet. *Tib.* 54.2, 61.1, *Cal.* 7; Dio 58.8.4. For the condemnation and death of Drusus in A.D. 33, see Tac. *Ann.* 4.60.4, 6.23.4-5, 6.24; Dio 58.3.8; Suet. *Tib.* 54.2, *Cal.* 7. In this same year occurred the death of Asinius Gallus (Tac. *Ann.* 6.23.1-3), a friend of Agrippina, whom Tiberius had condemned (Dio 58.3.1-6).

¹²⁶ The only instance recorded in our authors of any attempt on the part of Agrippina to direct public affairs at Rome has been referred to in note 105. Although the activity of Agrippina in either entreating or threatening the pontifices to include her sons' names with that of the Emperor was only a suspicion on the part of Tiberius, the actuality seems very probable.

nevertheless, by her desire for advancement for herself and for her family, and by her ungovernable and domineering nature,¹²⁷ she helped create an atmosphere of suspicion which greatly affected politics at Rome. Had she been willing to follow the advice of her husband and bide her time, she would not have played so easily into the hands of Sejanus, and her eldest son Nero might well have become the successor of Tiberius.

LIVILLA, JULIA, AEMILIA LEPIDA

The three other ladies of the court whom we mentioned above, Livilla, Julia, and Aemilia Lepida, were also ensnared in the meshes of the political ambitions and schemes of Sejanus. Livilla,¹²⁸ encouraged by prospects of marriage with the powerful minister,¹²⁹ and by the hope of sharing with him the imperial rule, lent her aid in the poisoning of her husband Drusus, son of the Emperor Tiberius.¹³⁰ This, at least, is the accusation that was brought against her by Apicata,¹³¹ the divorced wife of Sejanus,¹³² eight years after the death of Drusus.¹³³ Julia, the daughter of Livilla, assisted her mother and Sejanus in the persecution of her husband Nero¹³⁴ by reporting to Livilla his

¹²⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 1.33.5; 4.52.3.

¹²⁸ She is always so called by Suetonius (*e.g.* *Cl.* 1.6) and generally by Dio (57.22.2). She is consistently named *Livia* by Tacitus (*e.g.* *Ann.* 2.43.7) and is once so named by Dio (57.22.4^b).

¹²⁹ For Sejanus's relations with distinguished women see Dio 58.3.8. Cf. Joann. Antioch., exc. *Virt.* 7 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.*, 4.570). See also notes 107 and 108 of this chapter.

¹³⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 4.3.3-6, 4.8.1; Dio 57.22.2; Suet. *Tib.* 62.1.

¹³¹ Tac. *Ann.* 4.11.4. Dio (58.11.6) represents the statement as made after the execution of her children, which Tacitus places later (5.9.1).

¹³² Tac. *Ann.* 4.3.5.

¹³³ *Ibid.* 4.8.1, 11.4. Merivale (5¹.231) thinks that Livilla's guilt has been established beyond a doubt. Marsh (*op. cit.*, p. 198) also accepts the fact of her complicity. H. Dessau (*Geschichte der Römischen Kaiserzeit*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 32) is inclined to reject this idea. S. Baring-Gould (*The Tragedy of the Caesars*, pp. 351-2) insinuates that Agrippina I may have been privy to the crime. For Livilla's fate, see note 71 of this chapter.

¹³⁴ The eldest son of Agrippina and Germanicus, who stood next in the succession.

every move.¹³⁵ According to one authority,¹³⁶ Julia was betrothed to Sejanus after the banishment of Nero and Agrippina. Under Claudius she became a victim of the jealousy of Messalina and lost her life.¹³⁷ Aemilia Lepida, who was married to Drusus, the younger brother of Nero, acted as the tool of Sejanus by pursuing her husband with continual accusations.¹³⁸ Thus these three imperial ladies, by reason of the schemings of the pretorian prefect, were instrumental in cutting off three of those who might naturally have succeeded to the imperial throne.¹³⁹

As we review the political activities of the imperial women in the reign of Tiberius, we are impressed by the different kinds of influences by which the Emperor was surrounded. Livia's power over him was dominating, and supreme to the end of his life. She is spoken of as *socia dominationis* (Tac. *Ann.* 4. 57. 4). Antonia's influence seems to have been deeper, fostered, as it was, by feelings of high regard and of supreme confidence. Agrippina was a thorn in the Emperor's flesh, disturbing and irritating. The rivalry between the Julian and the Claudian families, which she so patently encouraged, had, as we have observed, a marked

¹³⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 4.60.4. For the fate of Nero, see note 125 of this chapter.

¹³⁶ Dio 58.3.9. Cf. Dio 58.7.5; Tac. *Ann.* 4.40.11, 5.6.2, 6.8.6; Suet. *Tib.* 65.1. Marsh (*op. cit.*, p. 192) believes that it was Livilla, and not her daughter, to whom Sejanus was betrothed. Furneaux, in his note on *Ann.* 4.40.11, is of the opinion that neither one is alluded to, and considers that, unless Tacitus or his authority has here inserted the words *quibus necessitudinibus inmiscere te mihi parem* by error, only some vague promise is held out in them. Nipperdey (1.387), in commenting on Tac. *Ann.* 5.6.2, says, "Es ist also, trotz des Verhältnisses, in welchem Sejan zur Livia stand (*Ann.* 4.3.3-6), kein Grund an der Nachricht des Zonaras (Dio 58.3.9) zu zweifeln, dass er mit Julia der Witwe des Nero verlobt gewesen sei. Dann würde *gener* hier für *progener* stehn." Merivale (5⁴.189, n.1) suspects that Tacitus (*Ann.* 4.39, 40) has sacrificed the truth in order to introduce an interesting dramatic interlude.

¹³⁷ See Chap. III, note 39.

¹³⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 6.40.4; Dio 58.3.8. For the fate of Drusus, see note 125 of this chapter. S. Baring-Gould (*op. cit.*, p. 350), while admitting the probability that Sejanus had drawn the princes on to their destruction, considers it also probable that the princes and their mother, Agrippina I, had entered into some conspiracy against the life of the Emperor. See Tac. *Ann.* 4.70.7, and note 104 of this chapter.

¹³⁹ For this conspiracy against Tiberius imputed to Sejanus, and for his downfall, see Tac. *Ann.* 5.8.1, 6.19.2, 23.5, 25.4, 47.2. See also Suet. *Tib.* 65. 1-2; Dio 58.9-13; Juv. 10.56-77. For a generous estimate of Sejanus, see Vell. Pat. 2.127.3.

bearing on the events of this reign. By arousing the enmity of Sejanus, Agrippina was indirectly the cause of the downfall of her two sons, Nero and Drusus, who became the victims of the powerful minister's political schemes with their wives, Julia and Aemilia Lepida. In Livilla, wife of Drusus, Tiberius found a faithless daughter-in-law who, in order to gratify her personal desires, was willing to sacrifice the heir to the throne.

III

INFLUENCE IN POLITICS AT ROME FROM CALIGULA TO NERO

Although it is true that women played a very important part in the life of Caligula,¹ the four short years of his reign are marked by comparatively little feminine activity. While he was still a young man, Caligula had been considerably influenced, as we have observed,² by his grandmother Antonia, with whom he lived after the death of his great-grandmother Livia. For the latter he seems to have entertained feelings of contempt, calling her *Ulixem stolatum*, and accusing her of low birth.³ This can be understood when we consider that his mother Agrippina I undoubtedly influenced his mind against the whole Claudian house,⁴ by her recital of the wrongs which she had suffered from both Livia and Tiberius.

DRUSILLA, AGRIPPINA II, JULIA LIVILLA (Under Caligula)

According to Seutonius, Caligula was helped to the throne by Ennia, wife of the prefect Macro.⁵ During his very serious illness in the first year of his rule, Caligula named his second sister, Drusilla, heir to his property and to the Empire,⁶ and designated her husband, M. Aemilius Lepidus, as his wished-for successor.⁷ The death of Drusilla in A.D. 38 left Caligula inconsolable.⁸

¹ For this entire reign we lack the evidence of Tacitus. For a recently published characterization of this Emperor, see Balsdon, *The Emperor Gaius*, Chap. VII.

² See the account of Antonia in Chap. II.

³ Suet. *Cal.* 23.2; *Ulixem stolatum* is aptly translated by Dr. Rolfe (Loeb translation) as "a Ulysses in petticoats."

⁴ Philo *Leg. ad Gaium* 33.

⁵ Suet. *Cal.* 26.1; cf. Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 6. In Suet. *Cal.* 12.2 Gaius is represented as originating the intrigue, while in Dio 58.28.4 and in Tac. *Ann.* 6.45.5 Macro is mentioned as the contriver.

⁶ Suet. *Cal.* 24.1; Sen. *Consol. ad Polyb.* 17.4-5, *Apocol.* 1.3-4.

⁷ Dio 59.22.6-7.

⁸ Sen. *Consol. ad Polyb.* 17.4-5; Suet. *Cal.* 24.2. According to a portion of the recently discovered fragment of the *Fasti Ostiensis*, referred to in Chap. II, note 85, her death occurred June 10: III IDUS JUN(IAS) DRUSILLA EXCESS (IT). For the honors paid to Drusilla after her death, see Chap. VII.

The following year his two other sisters, Agrippina II and Julia Livilla, were involved, according to Suetonius,⁹ in the plot of Gaetulicus¹⁰ and Lepidus against Caligula.¹¹ At the trial of Lepidus, Caligula condemned both sisters on the ground that they were in league with this conspirator; and he not only published letters in the handwriting of all three, which he had secured by trickery and seduction, but he also dedicated to Mars the Avenger, along with an inscription, three swords which had been designed to take his life. From a passage in Tacitus we infer that Agrippina was guilty of political aspirations, *spe dominationis*, and that she hoped to gain her ends through Lepidus.¹² Merivale feels that it is not improbable that the charge made against both sisters was substantially true.¹³ Stadelmann is in agreement with this point of view.¹⁴ Baldson has no doubt whatever of Agrippina's guilt, but feels that Julia Livilla did little more than play the part of confidante.¹⁵

Both Gaetulicus¹⁶ and Lepidus¹⁷ paid for this plot with their lives. The sisters were banished to the Pontian Islands¹⁸ and their property was confiscated.¹⁹ The failure of Caligula to put his sisters to death may be attributed, Stahr thinks,²⁰ either to his unwillingness to spill the sacred Julian blood, or to the fact that their participation in the actual act of treason was not clearly enough proved. Many of those who had shown friendship

⁹ Suet. *Cal.* 24.3. Julia Livilla is called Julia by Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.54.1, 6.15.4), and by Dio (60.8.5, 27.4). In Suet. *Cal.* 7 she is called Livilla; so also in *CIL* 6.891: LIVILLA [M. VINICI] GERMANICI C[ÆSARIS F.] HIC SITA [EST].

¹⁰ Commander of the army of Upper Germany; see Tac. *Ann.* 6.30.3; Suet. *Galba* 6.2. The *Acta Arvalium* of the year A.D. 39 make mention of this conspiracy. See *CIL* 6, Part 1, 2029, 32346.

¹¹ Suet. *Cl.* 9.1.

¹² Tac. *Ann.* 14.2.4; see the same passage for her relations with Lepidus. Cf. Dio 59.22.5 for the relations of both sisters with the conspirator.

¹³ *History of the Romans*⁴, 5.350.

¹⁴ *Messalina*, p. 191.

¹⁵ *The Emperor Gaius*, p. 73.

¹⁶ Dio 59.22.5.

¹⁷ Dio 59.22.6; cf. Sen. *Epist.* 1.4.7.

¹⁸ Dio 59.22.8; cf. Suet. *Cal.* 39.1.

¹⁹ Suet. *Cal.* 39.1-2. For their recall and the restoration of their property by Claudius, see Dio 60.4.1. For Julia's subsequent banishment and death at the instigation of Messalina, see the account of that Empress in this chapter.

²⁰ *Agrippina, die Mutter Neros*², p. 27.

toward the sisters were brought to trial, including some aediles and praetors, who were compelled to resign their offices.²¹

From this brief survey of the political activities of women during Caligula's reign, it is evident that there was no such participation in state affairs as we observed in the case of Livia. The management of the government seems to have been entirely in the Emperor's own hands.

MESSALINA (Under Claudius)

So far as the reign of Claudius was concerned, the Emperor managed almost all the affairs of the realm, Suetonius tells us,²² not so much according to his own judgment as that of his wives²³ and freedmen,²⁴ since, on nearly all occasions, he acted in such a way as to bring them profit and pleasure. Completely given over to them, Claudius played the part not of a prince, but of a servant, and because of their individual interests, or even because of their desires or fancies, he generously granted public honors, the command of armies, impunity or punishment.²⁵

The Empress Messalina²⁶ and the imperial freedmen, according to Dio,²⁷ actually offered for sale and hawked not only military commands, procuratorships, and governorships, but also everything else, so that all market-wares became scarce, and Claudius was compelled to gather the people in the Campus Martius, and there, from a platform, to fix the prices

²¹ Dio 59.23.8.

²² Suet. *Cl.* 25.5.

²³ *Ibid.* 26.2-3. Plautia Urgulanilla, and Aelia Paetina, both of whom he divorced, can hardly be included in this statement. The reference is to Messalina his third wife, and to Agrippina his fourth. For the dependence of Claudius on women, see Joann. Antioch. exc. *Virt.* 85 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.*, 4.573): καὶ πολλὸν μὲν χρόνον τῇ τηγῇ Λιουλῆ, πολλὸν δὲ καὶ τῇ μητρὶ Ἀγριππίνῃ τοῖς τε ἀπελευθέροις συνδιατίθεται, καὶ προσέτι καὶ ἐν συνουσταίαις γυναῖκα ὡς πλείοσι γενόμενος, οὐδὲν ἐλευθεροπρεπὲς ἐπέκτειτο.

²⁴ Dio 60.30.6^b. Callistus in charge of petitions, Narcissus as secretary, and Pallas as treasurer divided the power among themselves. Cf. Suet. *Cl.* 28.

²⁵ Suet. *Cl.* 29.1. Seneca (*Epist.* 47.9) states that he had seen the former master of Callistus waiting at the freedman's door in vain (desiring, no doubt, some office).

²⁶ Valeria Messalina, daughter of Messala Barbatus, who was a cousin of Claudius; see Suet. *Cl.* 26.2.

²⁷ Dio 60.17.8. Cf. Joann. Antioch., exc. *Virt.* 88 (in Müller, *op. cit.*, 4.573). For the similar influence of Caenis under Vespasian, see Dio 65.14.3.

of articles. Their influence was also strongly felt in the matter of the franchise, for although many persons who desired citizenship did receive it by personal application to the Emperor, there were many others who purchased it from Messalina and the freedmen. Although it was at first sold only for large sums, it later became so cheapened by the ease with which it could be obtained, that the story was invented that a man could become a citizen by giving the right person some bits of broken glass.²⁸

Under the influence of Messalina and the freedmen, Claudius would also recall his grants, annul his decisions, and either substitute false letters patent, or openly alter those which had been issued.²⁹ As a matter of fact, such was the power of the Empress and the freedmen that men like L. Vitellius and L. Annaeus Seneca fawned upon them, seeking through them to win the favor of Claudius. The servility of Vitellius was carried to such extremes that he constantly carried between his toga and his tunic the right slipper of the Empress and sometimes kissed it; while among his household gods he cherished the images of the freedmen, Narcissus and Pallas.³⁰ So far as Seneca was concerned, he did not cease during the period of his exile in Corsica to fawn upon Messalina and the freedmen,³¹ and in his book, *Consolatio ad Polybium*,³² he heaped upon them, as well as upon Claudius, extravagant praises.

The banishment of Seneca,³³ we have reason to believe, was only one of the many acts of Claudius which were prompted by Messalina. Early in the reign the young empress gave evidence of her ignoble emotions and ambitions. These were encouraged by the freedmen, who acted in complete agreement with her,³⁴

²⁸ Dio 60.17.5-6. See also *Acta Apost.* 22.28, where Claudius Lysias says: πολλοὺ κεφαλᾶν τούτην τὴν πολιτείαν ἐκτησάμεν. Compare the attitude of Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 40.3).

²⁹ Suet. *Cl.* 29.1.

³⁰ Suet. *Vit.* 2.5, see also Tac. *Ann.* 6.32.6-7.

³¹ Dio 61.10.2.

³² A treatise addressed to Polybius, the literary adviser of Claudius (Suet. *Cl.* 28), on the occasion of the death of his brother. Seneca hoped for the freedman's intercession with Claudius and Messalina for his recall from exile.

³³ Dio 60.8.5; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 13.42.3-5. According to Merivale (5⁴.461) Seneca's banishment can hardly be attributed to the schemings of Messalina against the friends and adherents of Julia.

³⁴ Dio 60.31.2.

and also by Claudius himself, who, by reason of his suspicious and cowardly nature,³⁵ became an easy prey to her evil inventions and schemes. Indeed, whenever the imperial freedmen and Messalina wished to put anyone to death, they would terrify Claudius, and as a result they would be allowed to carry out all their plans.³⁶

It was Messalina's resentment and jealousy, Dio tells us,³⁷ that were responsible for the banishment of her niece Julia³⁸ on invented charges, including adultery, for which Seneca also was exiled. Jealousy was likewise responsible for the death of Julia, daughter of Drusus,³⁹ and for the attempted strangling of the young Nero, feared as a rival of her son Britannicus.⁴⁰ Desire to avenge a personal slight brought about the murder of Appius Silanus, father-in-law of Claudius,⁴¹ by Claudius himself, at Messalina's instigation, simply on the evidence of a dream, invented by Narcissus and corroborated by herself.⁴² Vengeance was also the motive impelling Messalina and Narcissus and his fellow-freedmen⁴³ to cause the torture and execution of many men as well as women, by charging them with complicity in the plot of Camillus⁴⁴ against Claudius. Slaves and freedmen were even employed as informers against their own masters. Not only plebeians, but some of the knights and senators as well, were put to the torture, in spite of the fact that Claudius at the very

³⁵ See Suet. *Cl.* 35.1-2, 36. Cf. Joann. Antioch., exc. Salmas. 87 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.* 4.573): Κλαύδιος δειλὸς ὡν πάντας τοὺς προσιόντας αὐτοῦ (ἐποίησεν) ἀνερευνᾶσθαι, μὴ τι ξιφίδιον ἔχωσι, καὶ ἐν τοῖς συμποσίοις ὀπλισμένους παρεστήκεισαν αὐτῷ.

³⁶ Dio 60.14.1.

³⁷ See Dio 60.8.5. H. Stadtmann (*Messalina*, p. 198) states that Julia was banished on account of political intrigues with her friends, as well as for adulterous relations, and was subsequently put to death because she would not cease her plotting. Cf. Suet. *Cl.* 29.1, Tac. *Ann.* 14.63.2; Sen. *Consol. ad Polyb.* 13.2.

³⁸ Daughter of Germanicus; for the account of her first exile, see under Agrippina II (Caligula's reign).

³⁹ Granddaughter of Tiberius, Dio 60.18.4; cf. Suet. *Cl.* 29.1; Tac. *Ann.* 13.32.5; Sen. *Apocol.* 10.3.

⁴⁰ Suet. *Nero* 6.4.

⁴¹ Suet. *Cl.* 29.1.

⁴² Dio 60.14.3-4, Suet. *Cl.* 37.2; Tac. *Ann.* 11.29.1.

⁴³ Stadtmann (*Messalina*, p. 138) states that the three all-powerful freedmen frequently took refuge behind Messalina, a young and guileless (!) woman.

⁴⁴ For an account of the plot, see Dio 60.15, 16; Suet. *Cl.* 13.2, 35.2.

beginning of his reign had sworn that he would not torture any freeman.⁴⁵ Among those condemned was Caecina Paetus, whose wife Arria⁴⁶ refused to live after her husband had been put to death, although, according to Dio,⁴⁷ she might have occupied a position of some honor, since she was on very intimate terms with Messalina. Some of the most guilty, we are told, by means of favors and bribes, saved their lives with the help of Messalina and the freedmen.⁴⁸

Her fear that her loose conduct might be revealed to Claudius led Messalina to put out of the way Catonius Justus, commander of the pretorian guard.⁴⁹ The death of M. Vinicius,⁵⁰ the husband of Julia, daughter of Germanicus, is also attributed to Messalina by Dio, who gives as the reasons for her deed her fear of the vengeance of Vinicius, and her anger at his repudiation of her advances.⁵¹ Cn. Pompeius Magnus likewise fell a victim to the apprehensions of the Empress, for he was married to Antonia, daughter of Claudius by Paetina,⁵² and Messalina feared his family, and his relationship to the Emperor.⁵³

Messalina's avarice knew no bounds. Her desire to possess the beautiful gardens,⁵⁴ originally planned by L. Lucullus and possessed by Valerius Asiaticus,⁵⁵ resulted in false accusations brought against the latter by her tools, Suilius⁵⁶ and Sosibius,⁵⁷ and in the chamber trial in her presence, to which he was forced to submit, and in his subsequent compulsory suicide.⁵⁸ The

⁴⁵ Dio 60.15.5-6; cf. Joann. Antioch., exc. *Virt.* 88 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.*, 4.573). ταῖς τε τῆς γαμετῆς Βαλερίας Μεσσαλινῆς γυναικὸν ἀκολάστου καὶ τυραννικοῦ διαβολαῖς ὑπαγόμενος, συχνούς τῶν ἐπιστῆμων τῆς βουλῆς διέφθειρεν. See also Suet. *Cl.* 29.2.

⁴⁶ Pliny *Epist.* 3.16; Mart. 1.13; Tac. *Ann.* 16.34.3.

⁴⁷ Dio 60.16.6.

⁴⁸ Dio 60.16.2.

⁴⁹ Dio 60.18.3.

⁵⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 6.15.1-4.

⁵¹ Dio (60.27.4) states that Vinicius was poisoned by Messalina. He had been consul in A.D. 30 and 45. Merivale (5⁴.415) says that a cloud of distrust must be allowed to rest on the whole story.

⁵² Suet. *Cl.* 27.1-2; Dio 60.5.7.

⁵³ Dio 60.29.6^a, 31.8; Suet. *Cl.* 27.2.

⁵⁴ Plut. *Lucull.* 39.2.

⁵⁵ Dio 59.30.2, 60.27.1-3.

⁵⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 4.31.5. For the fate of Suilius later, see Tac. *Ann.* 13.43.3-5.

⁵⁷ Tutor of Britannicus, Dio 60.32.5.

⁵⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 11.1-3; Dio 60.29.5-6.

assistance which L. Vitellius rendered to Messalina on this occasion shows how completely subservient he was to her wishes. This tragedy was attended not only by the death of Poppaea, who was involved in the accusation against Asiaticus, and who was terrorized into taking her own life, but also by the condemnation of two distinguished Roman knights by a subservient senate.⁵⁹ When, however, Messalina went so far as to accuse falsely the freedman Polybius,⁶⁰ literary adviser of Claudius,⁶¹ and to cause his death, the rest of the imperial freedmen no longer trusted her,⁶² and her power consequently declined.

Messalina's last effort in mocking public affairs⁶³ was her shameful marriage to Silius, the consul-designate,⁶⁴ before duly summoned witnesses during the absence of Claudius in Ostia, and her appointment of Silius as consul.⁶⁵ The speedy return of Claudius to Rome at the instigation of Narcissus, who alone of the freedmen had the courage to inform him of the nuptials, was followed by quick action on the part of the bold freedman, who had the Empress put to death, in spite of the entreaties of both Messalina herself and of the Vestal Vibidia.⁶⁶

In this brief survey of Messalina's activities, gleaned from the authors studied, we have observed that her motives included:

⁵⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 11.2.5, 4.1. The real motive for Messalina's wrath was Poppaea's intrigue with one of her favorites, the pantomimic actor Mnester. Such was Messalina's infatuation for Mnester that she had statues made of him from the bronze obtained by melting coinage bearing the likeness of Gaius (Dio 60.22.3).

⁶⁰ Dio 60.29.3.

⁶¹ Suet. *Cl.* 28.

⁶² Dio 60.31.2.

⁶³ Tac. *Ann.* 12.7.5.

⁶⁴ Juv. 10.331-3; Tac. *Ann.* 11.5.3. Silius was the son of C. Silius, a friend of Germanicus. See Chap. II, note 109.

⁶⁵ Suet. *Cl.* 29.3, 36; Tac. *Ann.* 11.26-31; Dio 60.31.3-4. Suetonius suggests the possibility that Claudius sanctioned this marriage to avert from himself the evil which diviners prophesied was about to fall upon the head of the husband of Messalina. Merivale (5⁴.428-9) believes that there can be no reasonable doubt that Claudius had previously divorced his wife in due form, in order to make her new marriage legitimate. Scandalmongers of the day, the parasites of Claudius, the foes of Messalina, and, above all, Agrippina herself in her Memoirs, he says, may have combined to heighten the coloring of the story by dropping this essential feature in it. A. Stahr, in *Agrippina, die Mutter Neros*², p. 91, is in accord with this idea.

⁶⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 11.32-35, 37, 38; cf. Dio 60.31.5; Suet. *Cl.* 26.2; Juv. 14.329-31; Sen. *Apocol.* 11.4; Ps. Sen. *Octavia* 14-17.

(1) personal exaltation, as seen in her assumption, along with the freedmen, of imperial powers, and also in the banishment of her niece Julia who had failed to pay her honor and to flatter her; (2) jealousy in connection with both the Julias, and with Poppaea; (3) personal pride and a spirit of revenge in the case of Silanus; (4) vengeance against the conspirators; (5) avarice in her desire for the gardens of Asiaticus; and (6) passion in her infatuation for Silius. To gain her ignoble ends she employed such means as blandishments, terrorism, trickery, false accusations, bribery, banishment, murder, compulsory suicide, and an audacious marriage. Her tools were not only Claudius himself and the imperial freedmen, but the members of the senate, especially Vitellius, the delator Suilius, the tutor Sosibius, Silius a consul-designate, and slaves and freedmen in general.

Merivale⁶⁷ is inclined to believe that Messalina's enormities have been exaggerated by sinister influence. It may still remain doubtful, he says, whether she was the victim of Agrippina's ambition, or of the fears of the freedmen; also whether these two powers combined together for her overthrow, or whether each followed its own objects with mutual jealousy and distrust.

AGRIPPINA II (Under Claudius)

Whether Agrippina II was implicated in the death of Messalina or not, she lost no time in pressing her claims to become empress. Her success was a complete political triumph. The account, as given by Tacitus,⁶⁸ embraces her endorsement of her own candidacy,⁶⁹ her blandishments practiced upon the dull-witted Claudius,⁷⁰ the arguments of Pallas⁷¹ in the Emperor's Council, the ardent support of Vitellius⁷² in the senate, the enthu-

⁶⁷ *History of the Romans*⁴, 5.436. Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 12.65.3-4. Stahr (*op. cit.*, p. 74) sees in the history of Messalina "das Gepräge der absichtlichen Übertreibung und der geflissentlichen Schwarzmalerei."

⁶⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 12.1-7.

⁶⁹ The other candidates, Aelia Paetina (Suet. *Cl.* 26.2-3) and Lollia Paulina (Suet. *Cal.* 25.2, *Cl.* 26.3; Dio 59.12.1), were supported by Narcissus and Callistus, respectively.

⁷⁰ Cf. Dio 60.31.6.

⁷¹ See note 24 of this chapter.

⁷² Compare his servility to Messalina in the account of that Empress.

siastic acclaim of the senators⁷³ and of a chance mob collected by them, the concurrence of Claudius himself, and the legalization for all future time of marriages between an uncle and a brother's daughter.⁷⁴ In this account we are impressed with the widening of the scope of woman's influence in the political life at Rome. Livia's power had sprung chiefly from her ascendancy over Augustus and her mastery of Tiberius; Messalina's strength lay in her control of Claudius and of the imperial freedmen; but Agrippina's domination extended from the Emperor Claudius to his freedman Pallas, and to his courtier Vitellius, exerting through the last-mentioned an unprecedented influence upon the senators themselves and through them upon the mob. From the gates of the palace to the man on the street the pulse of her power was felt.

Tacitus⁷⁵ goes so far as to say that after Agrippina became empress everything was dominated by a woman—one who did not, however, in mere wantonness⁷⁶ like Messalina, mock Roman affairs. He characterizes her management as *adductum et quasi virile*. According to Dio,⁷⁷ she gained complete control over Claudius. She was very clever in using her opportunities, and partly by intimidation and partly by kindness, she won the favor of those who were at all well-disposed to the Emperor,⁷⁸ including his freedmen, Narcissus and Pallas. Agrippina often attended the Emperor in public, when he was transacting business, or when he was giving an audience to ambassadors, although she sat upon a separate tribunal.⁷⁹ Indeed, on the occasion when Caractacus and his wife and brothers were pardoned by Claudius, Agrippina, conspicuous on a separate platform, was venerated by them with the same praise and thanks as the Emperor himself. The amazement of Tacitus at this state of affairs finds

⁷³ Cf. Dio 60.31.8.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* See also Suet. *Cl.* 26.3; Tac. *Ann.* 12.7.3. Dio (68.2.4) states that this decree was abolished by Nerva: ἐνομοθέτησε . . . μηδὲ ἀδελφιδὴν γαμεῖν, but Gaius (*Inst.* 1.62) speaks of it as still in force in his day.

⁷⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 12.7.5. Cf. Dio 60.33.3^a: ἡδύνατο πάντα.

⁷⁶ Tac. *loc. cit.*: nihil domi impudicum nisi dominationi expidiret.

⁷⁷ Dio 60.32.1.

⁷⁸ Dio 60.32.1, 33.3^a.

⁷⁹ Dio 60.33.7. Dio's comment is significant: καὶ ἦν καὶ τοῦτο οὐδενὸς ἑλκρον θέαμα.

expression in these words: *novum sane et moribus veterum insolitum, feminam signis Romanis praesidere: ipsa semet parti a maioribus suis imperii sociam ferebat*.⁸⁰ On another occasion, when a great fire was spreading over the city, the Empress accompanied Claudius as he lent his aid.⁸¹

Agrippina's influence in affairs of state was so strong that she was able to secure the recall of Seneca from exile, and his appointment as praetor, hoping that she and her supporters might use his counsels in their designs upon the sovereignty.⁸² She was able also to effect the removal from the joint command of the pretorian guards of Lusius Geta and Rufius Crispinus, who, she believed, were devoted to the memory of Messalina and to her children.⁸³ In their place she secured the appointment of Burrus Afranius, a man of high reputation in military affairs, but one, also, who fully realized by whose favor he was receiving the command.⁸⁴ So completely did Agrippina identify herself with public affairs that on the occasion of the opening of the waterway for the draining of Lake Fucinus she was not only present, seated beside the Emperor Claudius, but she also took advantage of the Emperor's terror, when the rush of water unexpectedly swept off everything near it, to rail against Narcissus for his greed and robbery in carrying out the work.⁸⁵

No one attempted in any way to check the Empress.⁸⁶ Her vengeance, Tacitus tells us,⁸⁷ was responsible for the death of the wealthy Lollia Paulina,⁸⁸ against whom she bore a grudge for her rivalry in the matter of the imperial marriage with Claudius. Through Agrippina's influence, Claudius charged Lollia with

⁸⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 12.37.4-6; cf. Dio 60.33.3.

⁸¹ Dio 60.33.12. Compare with Livia's conduct under Tiberius, Chap. II, note 27.

⁸² Tac. *Ann.* 12.8.3.

⁸³ *Ibid.* 12.42.1; cf. Dio 60.32.6.

⁸⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 12.42.2.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 12.56.5, 57 (entire); cf. Dio 60.33.3-5; Suet. *Cl.* 20.1-2, 32. For the growing feeling of enmity between Agrippina and Narcissus, see Tac. *Ann.* 12.65.2-4.

⁸⁶ Dio 60.33.1.

⁸⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 12.22.1-4; cf. Dio 60.32.4. Her ashes were subsequently brought back to Rome with Nero's permission, and a mausoleum was erected to her memory (*ibid.* 14.12.6). See also note 69 of this chapter.

⁸⁸ Pliny *H. N.* 9.35, 58, 116.

evil designs against the state, and condemned her to exile and her property to confiscation. Later she was forced to commit suicide. Agrippina's greed was the direct cause of the death of an ex-consul, Statilius Taurus, whose beautiful gardens she coveted.⁸⁹ She employed as her tool the senator Tarquinius Priscus, who brought charges against Taurus. The latter, without awaiting the judgment of the senate, took his own life. So great was the resentment of the senators against Priscus that they expelled him from the senate, in spite of Agrippina's interest in his behalf.⁹⁰ In the banishment of Junia Calvina, and of Calpurnia, as well as of Valerius Capito and Licinius Gabolus, both men of pretorian rank,⁹¹ we have further evidence of Agrippina's power to rid herself of those who were in any way obnoxious to her. We have proof of this also in the condemnation and death of Domitia Lepida, Nero's aunt, by which act Agrippina brought to an end the bitter struggle *amita potius an mater apud Neronem praevaleret*.⁹² For her favorites Agrippina exerted her powers without stint. When L. Vitellius was charged with high treason and a desire for imperial power, she espoused his cause, and by her threats rather than by her entreaties she caused Claudius to acquit Vitellius, and to banish his accuser, Junius Lupus.⁹³

As soon as Agrippina's position as empress was firmly established, she began to direct her efforts toward her next aim, the advancement of her son Domitian to the imperial succession. Her first step was to secure an alliance⁹⁴ between her son and Octavia, daughter of Claudius, who was already betrothed to L. Silanus.⁹⁵ This was carried out with phenomenal political intrigue. The false charges trumped up against Silanus by Vitellius, then censor, his expulsion from the senate, the cancellation of his

⁸⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 12.59.1-2. Statilius was consul A.D. 44. See Dio 60.23.1.

⁹⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 12.59.3-4. For the later fate of Priscus, see *ibid.* 14.46.1.

⁹¹ For these instances, see Tac. *Ann.* 12.8.1, 22.3, 14.12.5.

⁹² *Ibid.* 12.64.6, 64.4, 65.1-2; cf. Suet. *Nero* 6.3, 7.1.

⁹³ Tac. *Ann.* 12.42.4-5.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 12.3.2, cf. Dio 60.31.8; Suet. *Cl.* 27.2. For their later marriage, see Tac. *Ann.* 12.58.1; Dio 60.32.2, 33.2², 33.11; Suet. *Nero* 7.2.

⁹⁵ A great-great-grandson of Augustus (Sen. *Apocol.* 10.3). He held high offices at a very early age (Tac. *Ann.* 12.3.2; *CIA* 3.1.612; *CIL* 6.1.2032; Dio 60.5.8, 31.7).

betrothal to Octavia, the bribing of the consul-designate, Mammius Pollio, by enormous promises to move in the senate that Claudius should be petitioned to betroth Octavia to Domitius, were all, according to Tacitus,⁹⁶ directly traceable to Agrippina herself. She did not hesitate to tamper with the highest officials of Rome and to cause such constitutional irregularities as the expulsion of Silanus from the senate when Silanus was holding the position of praetor,⁹⁷ and the lustrum had been closed.⁹⁸ That Vitellius should be willing to use his title of censor as a cloak for servility and falsehood in order to win a woman's favor⁹⁹ is indeed a sign of changed times in the history of Rome.

Agrippina's further efforts in her son's behalf included her recall of Seneca from exile to be his tutor,¹⁰⁰ the adoption of Domitius by Claudius,¹⁰¹ effected by the persuasions of her devoted agent Pallas,¹⁰² his assumption of the toga virilis before the usual age,¹⁰³ the bestowing upon him of high titles and privileges by Claudius, who was influenced by the flatteries of the senate,¹⁰⁴ and the amassing of untold wealth for him.¹⁰⁵ Nero's appearance at the Circensian Games,¹⁰⁶ dressed in triumphal garb, while Britannicus wore his purple-edged toga, was cal-

⁹⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 12.3.2, 4.1-5, 9.1.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 12.4.5; Suet. *Cl.* 29.2. Dio (60.31.8) says that the charge of treason was imputed. For proof of Silanus's innocence, see Ps. Sen. *Octavia* 145-9.

⁹⁸ With this ceremony the office of censor should properly have closed; see Mommsen, *Staatsr.* 2.340.5, 413.6.

⁹⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 12.4.1: *nomine censoris serviles fallacias obtegens, quo gratiam Agrippinae pararet.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 12.8.3; cf. Dio 60.32.3; Suet. *Nero* 7.1. See also note 82 of this chapter.

¹⁰¹ Tac. *Ann.* 12.26.1; Suet. *Nero* 7.1; Dio 60.32.2; Jos. *Bell. Jud.* 2.248-9; Plut. *Ant.* 87.8; Ps. Sen. *Octavia* 139-40: . . . *qui nato suo/praeferre potuit sanguine alieno satum.*

¹⁰² Tac. *Ann.* 12.25.1-3; cf. *ibid.* 13.2.3. According to Dio (60.32.2) Agrippina accomplished her purposes partly by prevailing upon Claudius through the freedmen, and partly by arranging beforehand that the senate, the people, and the soldiers should join together in shouting their approval of her demands on every occasion.

¹⁰³ In A.D. 51, when Nero had just completed his thirteenth year (Tac. *Ann.* 12.41.1). For the date of his birth, see Suet. *Nero* 6.1.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 12.41.2: *ut vicensimo aetatis anno consulatum Nero iniret atque interim designatus proconsulare imperium extra urbem haberet ac princeps iuventutis appellaretur.*

¹⁰⁵ Dio 60.32.3, 61.6.5. Nero was greatly enriched by his share of the inheritance from his stepfather, Passienus Crispus (Suet. *Nero* 6.3).

¹⁰⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 12.41.3-4.

culated to foster in the minds of the people the idea of the succession of Nero instead of Britannicus. This impression was strengthened, and popularity was gained for Nero by the steps taken by Agrippina during an illness of Claudius in A.D. 52. Not only did she prompt Nero to promise in the senate a horse race¹⁰⁷ in case the Emperor should recover, but after she herself had caused an uproar over the sale of bread, she persuaded Claudius to issue an edict to the people, and to send word to the senate that, if he should die, Nero was capable of managing the state.¹⁰⁸ The plight of Britannicus meanwhile was such that Tacitus¹⁰⁹ remarks: *nemo adeo expers misericordiae fuit quem non Britannici fortuna maerore adficeret*. Agrippina succeeded in inducing Claudius to exile or to put to death the best of his tutors, and to place him under the guardianship of persons whom she herself appointed.¹¹⁰ She removed, on various pretexts, the centurions and tribunes who pitied the prince's lot, and even any freedmen who were upright and loyal.¹¹¹ Moreover she purposely kept Britannicus out of the sight of the Emperor most of the time.¹¹²

In the final steps taken to insure her son's succession to the throne Agrippina showed herself complete mistress of the situation. In disposing of Claudius¹¹³ she made use of the services not only of the famous poisoner Locusta,¹¹⁴ but even of the imperial taster Helotus, and of Xenophon, the physician of the Emperor. She was able to do this because Narcissus, as it happened, was not present; otherwise it would have been impossible, for the freedman guarded the Emperor too carefully.¹¹⁵ In her attempts to conceal the death of Claudius until the propitious moment promised by the Chaldeans, she took precautions such as Livia

¹⁰⁷ Dio 60.33.9; cf. Suet. *Nero* 7.2.

¹⁰⁸ Dio 60.33.10.

¹⁰⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 12.26.3; cf. Dio 60.32.1, 33.10.

¹¹⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 12.41.6-8; cf. Dio 60.32.5-6.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* 12.41.5.

¹¹² Dio 60.34.1, 32.6.

¹¹³ Tac. *Ann.* 12.66, 67; Dio 60.34.2-3; Suet. *Cl.* 44.1-3, *Nero* 33.1; Aur. Vict. 4.10; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 20.8.

¹¹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 12.66.4: (Locusta) diu inter instrumenta regni habita; cf. Juv. 1.71.2.

¹¹⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 12.66.1-2; Dio 60.34.4.

had employed in the case of Augustus. By securing all the approaches with guards, and by spreading abroad the report that her husband's health was improving, she made possible the sudden dramatic appearance of Nero, accompanied by Burrus, and his acceptance as Emperor, first by the soldiers, and then by the senate.¹¹⁶ The will of Claudius was never publicly read, because it was feared that the preference which it gave to the stepson over the real one would stir up the feelings of the people.¹¹⁷

This survey of Agrippina's political activities during the reign of Claudius shows how successfully she carried out her aims. To achieve her first objective, namely her advancement to the position of empress, Agrippina resorted, as we have seen, to self-advertisement, to blandishments practiced upon Claudius, and to the favor of the powerful freedman Pallas, and of the courtier Vitellius, as well as of the senators in general, and of a chance mob. In securing her second aim, namely her son's succession to the throne, she employed as her agents, in her preliminary plans, the Emperor himself, Vitellius who was then censor, Mammius Pollio the consul-designate, Seneca, Pallas, Britannicus, and the senate as a whole. To achieve her purposes she made use of false accusations, of bribery, of constitutional irregularities, of betrothal, of adoption, of evasion of established customs, of riots, of murder, and of dismissal from office. In the final steps she sacrificed Claudius himself at the hands of the poisoner Locusta, with the connivance of the imperial taster and of the court physician, and subsequently she made use of the services of Burrus, the pretorian prefect, to secure the acceptance of Nero as Emperor by the soldiers and by the senate.

We have observed also in this survey Agrippina's association with the Emperor Claudius on a basis of equality in the conduct of public affairs, both domestic and foreign, and we have noted her influence in the matter of appointments, of dismissals, of recall from exile, and of control of the freedmen. We have seen

¹¹⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 12.68, 69; Suet. *Cl.* 45; cf. Chap. I, note 21.

¹¹⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 12.69.5; cf. Dio 61.1.1-2. For a favorable estimate of Claudius, based on recent discoveries of inscriptions and papyri, see A. Momigliano, *Claudius: The Emperor and His Achievement*.

also how she made use of banishment and of death in order to satisfy her feelings of vengeance, of greed, and of jealousy.

If we compare the accounts of the two women whose influence was outstanding during the reign of Claudius, we see this essential difference:—Messalina, although interested, in a measure, in the succession of Britannicus, was not politically minded; she was much more concerned with her own private desires, and used her influence over Claudius to satisfy them. Agrippina II, on the other hand, was born to rule, and, as we have seen, she virtually succeeded in securing for herself the *consortium imperii*.

AGRIPPINA II (Under Nero)

In the early part of Nero's reign Agrippina II was still a prominent figure politically, for Nero entrusted to her the management of affairs both public and private.¹¹⁸ Her domination is shown by her successful attempt to free herself from the fear which she felt for Junius Silanus,¹¹⁹ Proconsul of Asia, who was being mentioned in popular talk as a more suitable choice for emperor than Nero.¹²⁰ In effecting his death she employed as her agents of poisoning a Roman knight, P. Celer, and a freedman called Helius, who was in charge of the Emperor's affairs in Asia.¹²¹ Agrippina's hatred of Narcissus found gratification in his imprisonment soon after the death of Claudius.¹²² The cruel treatment which he received in prison drove him to suicide. Her influence even after his death is shown in the fear which she inspired in Vespasian, a friend of Narcissus,¹²³ who until the time of his proconsulate¹²⁴ devoted himself to rest and retirement.

From Tacitus we learn that at least in the early part of Nero's reign Agrippina had firsthand acquaintance with the proceedings of the senate, for this body was called together in the Pala-

¹¹⁸ Suet. *Nero* 9; Dio 61.3.2.

¹¹⁹ He was the brother of Lucius Silanus, who had been betrothed to Octavia; see note 95 of this chapter.

¹²⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 13.1.1-2; Dio 61.6.4-5.

¹²¹ Tac. *Ann.* 13.1.3-4; Dio 61.6.4.

¹²² Dio 60.34.4; Tac. *Ann.* 13.1.4; cf. Dio 60.34.6, 64.3.4¹. See also Joann. Antioch., exc. *De ins.* 89 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.*, 4.573-4).

¹²³ Suet. *Vesp.* 4.1-2.

¹²⁴ In Africa, A.D. 63.

tine Library so that she might stand behind a curtain at a door constructed at the back, where she could not be seen, but could hear everything.¹²⁵ That she even opposed decrees of the senate appears from this same passage, in which she is represented as objecting to the measure to relieve quaestors-designate from the obligation of holding gladiatorial shows, because she regarded it as a reversal of one of the acts of Claudius, and therefore practically as a reversal of one of her own. Agrippina's domination of foreign affairs at Rome was also marked. According to Dio,¹²⁶ she gave audience to ambassadors and sent letters to nations and governors and kings. On the occasion of the reception of Nero to the embassy of Armenia, Agrippina was prevented from mounting the tribunal with her son only by the quick action of Seneca, who thus concealed from the foreigners the weakness in the Empire.¹²⁷ At the end of the year, when Armenia was seized by the Parthians, the scornful question raised in gossip-loving Rome was, *Quod subsidium in eo qui a femina regetur?*¹²⁸

Agrippina, so Suetonius tells us,¹²⁹ aggravated Nero by her too rigorous supervision and criticism of his acts and words, and, as a result, Nero from time to time increased the weight of her unpopularity by acting as if he intended to give up the throne and go away to Rhodes. The waning of her power early in her son's reign not only through the efforts of Burrus and Seneca,¹³⁰ but also by reason of the breach between herself and Nero, occasioned by his infatuation for Acte,¹³¹ was clearly manifested by Nero's dismissal of Pallas, her favorite, from the position of treasurer.¹³² Agrippina's resultant indignation, expressing itself in the threat

¹²⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 13.5.2. Furneaux considers it probable that the senate met in the library of Apollo, where Augustus in his old age had often held senate meetings (Suet. *Aug.* 29.3). See Mommsen, *Staatsr.* 3.929.3. Compare Agrippina's concern over senate proceedings with the attitude of Livia, Chap. II, note 16.

¹²⁶ Dio 61.3.2; compare with Livia, Chap. II, note 23.

¹²⁷ In A.D. 54; see Dio 61.3.4; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 13.5.3.

¹²⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 13.6.1-2.

¹²⁹ Suet. *Nero* 34.1.

¹³⁰ For their feeling toward Agrippina, see Tac. *Ann.* 13.2.3: certamen utrique unum erat contra ferociam Agrippinae, quae cunctis malae dominationis cupidinibus flagrans habebat in partibus Pallantem.

¹³¹ Tac. *Ann.* 13.12, 13; Dio 61.7.1; Suet. *Nero* 28.1.

¹³² Tac. *Ann.* 13.14.1-2.

to befriend Britannicus and to establish him on the throne,¹³³ found its answer in the death of that young prince,¹³⁴ while her frantic efforts to sponsor Octavia's cause¹³⁵ led to a considerable loss of her own prestige.¹³⁶ From the charge of treason brought against her by Silana,¹³⁷ she was allowed to defend herself only by the intervention of Burrus. From this time until her death, four years later, we have no evidence of her active participation in the affairs of state.

A glance at Agrippina's activities during the reign of her son shows an inclination on her part to continue the domination which characterized her control under Claudius. Her removal of Silanus by poisoning, and of Narcissus by imprisonment and compulsory suicide, were clear proofs of this inclination. Her attitude toward the senate proceedings, and her arrogance in appearing before the embassy of Armenia bear out the statement of Tacitus that she could not endure her son's sovereignty (*Ann.* 12. 64. 6). Her indomitable spirit continued to manifest itself, in spite of the weakening of her influence over Nero. Although her efforts in behalf of Britannicus and Octavia were unsuccessful, it was no small triumph that she was able to save herself from the charge of treason which was laid against her. To Agrippina belonged an unusual distinction—her association with ruling emperors in the capacity of grandchild, of sister, of wife, and finally of mother.

¹³³ *Ibid.* 13.14.3-6.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.* 13.15, 16; Suet. *Nero* 33.2-3; Dio 61.7.4; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 20.8. In these passages the responsibility for the death of Britannicus is definitely placed upon Nero. Stahr (*Agrippina*, p. 292), however, says: "Der ganze an Britannicus verübte Giftmord ist verdächtig." In defense of Nero he remarks: "Der schüchterne junge Kaiser, der vor seiner Mutter Drohworten zitterte, war schwerlich der Mann, der sich einer That wie diese vermass." Merivale [64.288 (1872)] feels that in this crime we see the hand of the master of statecraft, Seneca.

¹³⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 13.18.3: . . . amplecti Octaviam, crebra cum amicis secreta habere, super ingenitam avaritiam undique pecunias quasi in subsidium corripens; tribunos et centuriones comiter excipere, nomina et virtutes nobilium, qui etiam tum supererant, in honore habere, quasi quaereret duces et partis.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.* 13.18.4-5. The measures resorted to by Nero included the removal of the *excubias militaris* as well as of the German guards, and the transfer of his mother from his palace to a separate dwelling, *ne coetu salutantium frequentaretur*. See also Dio 61.8.4, 6.

¹³⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 13.19.3-4, 20-22. Silana was sent into exile (*ibid.* 13.22.3). For her later fate, see *ibid.* 14.12.7.

POPPEA SABINA

Poppaea Sabina, Nero's mistress,¹³⁸ impelled by a desire to become Empress of Rome, exerted a very considerable influence during his reign. Her realization that so long as Agrippina lived there would be no hope of seeing Octavia divorced and herself married to Nero was responsible for the pressure which she brought to bear upon the Emperor by her reproaches, her banterings,¹³⁹ her blandishments, and even her tears,¹⁴⁰ to commit the murder of his mother.¹⁴¹ The most potent argument which she advanced was that Nero was a ward, subservient to another's bidding; he was no emperor; he was not even a free man.¹⁴²

Her hold upon Nero is further seen in her schemes for the divorcement of Octavia and for her death. Her first efforts, insinuations of Octavia's intrigue with an Egyptian flute player, which she incited one of Octavia's attendants to adduce,¹⁴³ came to nothing, frustrated by the evidence of the majority of Octavia's maidservants.¹⁴⁴ Octavia's subsequent divorcement by Nero, and her removal to Campania¹⁴⁵ in spite of her innocence, afforded Poppaea only temporary gratification, which was soon replaced by fear,¹⁴⁶ when Octavia was recalled by reason of the indignation of the populace.¹⁴⁷ Her passionate appeal to Nero, as his wife, pointing out the danger not only to herself, but also

¹³⁸ For an account of her family and her character, see Tac. *Ann.* 13.45, 46. For the fate of her mother Poppaea, *aetatis suae feminas pulchritudine supergressa*, see note 59 of this chapter. For her relations with Otho, the future emperor, see Tac. *loc. cit.*, Dio 61.11.2; Plut. *Galba* 19.2, 4, 5.

¹³⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 14.1.1: *crebris criminationibus, aliquando per facetias*. The former may very well refer to charges against Agrippina and Octavia.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 14.1.5.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* 14.3-8; Dio 61.12, 13; Suet. *Nero* 34.2-4, 39.2. See note 149 of this chapter.

¹⁴² Tac. *Ann.* 14.1.1.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.* 14.60.2-3.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 14.60.4, 62.1. See also Dio 62.13.4; cf. Suet. *Nero* 35.2.

¹⁴⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 14.60.5; Dio 62.13.1; Suet. *Nero* 35.2.

¹⁴⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 14.61.3: *metu atrox ne aut vulgi acrior vis ingrueret aut Nero inclinatione populi mutaretur*.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 14.60.6. The lacuna in the manuscript at this point—his . . . tamquam Nero paenitentia flagitii coniugem revocarit—has given rise to various conjectures as to whether or not Nero actually recalled Octavia. For a discussion of the readings which have been proposed for this passage, see Furneaux, *The Annals of Tacitus*, 2.464, fn. 4.

to him from mob violence,¹⁴⁸ was followed by measures calculated to succeed. The resolution to extort a confession of adultery with Octavia from some person upon whom could be fastened a charge of treason also, led to the choice of Anicetus, commander of the fleet at Misenum.¹⁴⁹ His confession, going even beyond orders, was followed by an edict of Nero, announcing as an ascertained fact that Octavia had tampered with the prefect in the hope of bringing the fleet over to her cause.¹⁵⁰ This led to her banishment to the island of Pandateria, where she shortly after met with a violent death.¹⁵¹

Poppaea's power as Empress was widespread. Gessius Florus, husband of Cleopatra who was an intimate friend of Poppaea, was made governor of Judaea by reason of this friendship.¹⁵² Through Poppaea's influence, Josephus, who seems to have admired her very much,¹⁵³ secured the freedom of some Jewish priests who had been sent to Rome as prisoners by M. Antonius Felix.¹⁵⁴ Undoubtedly it was at Poppaea's instigation that Doryphorus, Secretary of Petitions,¹⁵⁵ forfeited his life for disapproving of Nero's passion for her.¹⁵⁶ Tacitus leads us to infer that she was a party to all Nero's atrocities, for he says that she and Tigellinus¹⁵⁷ formed the cruel Emperor's inner council.¹⁵⁸ At all events we have a record that she was present with Nero and his pretorian prefect when the tribune Gavius Silvanus¹⁵⁹ returned

¹⁴⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 14.61.3-7.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 14.62.2-3; Suet. *Nero* 35.2. Anicetus was also the murderer of Nero's mother; see note 141 of this chapter.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 14.63.1.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.* 14.63.1, 64.3; Suet. *Nero* 35.2; Dio 62.13.1.

¹⁵² Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 20.11.1.

¹⁵³ See Chap. VII, note 29.

¹⁵⁴ Jos. *Vit.* 3. Felix was the procurator of Judaea (Tac. *Ann.* 12.54.1; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 20.7.1; *Acta Apost.* 23.24), and the brother of Pallas, a *rationalis* under Claudius (Suet. *Cl.* 28).

¹⁵⁵ *A libellis*; see Dio 61.5.4. He was probably the successor to Callistus in this position. See note 24 of this chapter.

¹⁵⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 14.65.1.

¹⁵⁷ He was appointed pretorian prefect along with Faenius Rufus after the death of Burrus (Tac. *Ann.* 14.51.5-6). For his cruelty, see *ibid.* 14.60.4, 15.50.4, 58.3. For the suspicion regarding his improper relations with Agrip-pina II, see Dio 59.23.9.

¹⁵⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 15.61.4.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 15.60.6.

with the report of the interview with Seneca, which led to the philosopher's death.¹⁶⁰

Briefly, then, we might say that Poppaea, in order to free herself from the fear of rivalry, and in order to advance herself to the position of Empress of Rome, caused the murder of Agrippina, and the divorcement, banishment, and death of Octavia, by practicing upon Nero her womanly wiles, and by adducing false charges through the agency of slaves and of a commander of the fleet. She furthermore exerted her influence in the matter of appointments and pardons, and also undoubtedly made recommendations for forfeiture of life. Her death seems to have occasioned joy to those around her rather than grief.¹⁶¹

OCTAVIA

From the account of Poppaea which has just been given one gains some idea of the political strength of Octavia. Nero, Tacitus says,¹⁶² hated her because of her popularity with the masses. Both he and Poppaea had strong evidence of this feeling on the part of the people in the loud and indignant outburst which greeted the announcement of Octavia's divorcement and her banishment to Campania.¹⁶³ Upon her recall by Nero,¹⁶⁴ popular enthusiasm knew no bounds, manifesting itself by overturning the statues of Poppaea, and carrying those of Octavia shoulder-high, crowned with flowers, and setting them up in the Forum and in the temples.¹⁶⁵ Such popularity could not be brooked. Nero, with Poppaea's aid, disposed of this formidable rival, as we have seen.

During Nero's reign other women besides those of the imperial family made their influence felt. For the conspiracy formed in

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 15.61.4-5. For the account of Seneca's death, see *ibid.* 15.63.4-6, 64.3-5; cf. Dio 62.24.1, 25.1-3; Suet. *Nero* 35.5. The death of Paulina, Seneca's wife, was arrested by Nero's order, according to the account of Tacitus (*Ann.* 15.64.1-2).

¹⁶¹ *Tac. Ann.* 16.7.1.

¹⁶² *Ibid.* 14.59.4.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.* 14.60.6; cf. note 145 of this chapter.

¹⁶⁴ See note 147 of this chapter.

¹⁶⁵ *Tac. Ann.* 14.61.1-2; cf. Chap. II, note 124. This decoration of statues with flowers seems to have been akin to the honor paid to persons on the occasion of a triumph. See Livy 33.33.2; Ovid *Trist.* 4.2.49.

A.D. 65 to assassinate Nero and to put C. Piso on the throne,¹⁶⁶ even women, Tacitus tells us,¹⁶⁷ eagerly gave in their names. Among the conspirators, according to his account, there were persons of different birth, rank, age, and sex, and rich and poor alike.¹⁶⁸ We have mention of at least two women of high position, namely Acilia, mother of Lucan, who was shamefully betrayed by her son,¹⁶⁹ and Caedicia, wife of the senator Flavius Scaevinus.¹⁷⁰ Caedicia was banished by Nero. This sentence gave her the first intimation that a charge had been brought against her.¹⁷¹ The conspiracy against Nero cannot be passed over without mention of two other women who played a conspicuous part in it, namely the wife of the freedman Milichus, and the freedwoman Epicharis. The former, by her base and womanlike counsels, as Tacitus puts it,¹⁷² induced her husband to reveal to Nero his suspicions with regard to his patron Scaevinus, thus laying bare the entire conspiracy.¹⁷³ The latter, entrusted with all the details of the conspiracy,¹⁷⁴ manifested her impatience with the procrastination of the conspirators by a futile attempt to involve the fleet at Misenum through their captain Volusius Proculus.¹⁷⁵ Upon the discovery of the plot, she acted very nobly. Although frequently tortured by the cruel Tigellinus,¹⁷⁶ she refused to betray men who were practically strangers to her, while men of free birth, including senators and knights, although untortured, were betraying their dearest kinsfolk.¹⁷⁷

¹⁶⁶ For a full account of the conspiracy, see Tac. *Ann.* 15.48-74. Cf. Dio 62. 24-27; Suet. *Nero* 36.1-2.

¹⁶⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 15.48.1.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 15.54.1.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 15.56.4. For Lucan's part in the conspiracy, see *ibid.* 15.49.2-3. His motive in naming his innocent mother is given as follows in Suet. *Vita Lucani*: sperans impietatem sibi apud parricidam principem profuturam. According to Tac. *Ann.* 15.71.12, Acilia was ignored by Nero, without pardon and without punishment.

¹⁷⁰ See Tac. *Ann.* 15.49.4. Scaevinus claimed for himself the leading part in the conspiracy; see *ibid.* 15.53.3.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.* 15.71.11.

¹⁷² *Ibid.* 15.54.6.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* 15.55, 56.

¹⁷⁴ Dio 62.27.3.

¹⁷⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 15.51.1-8.

¹⁷⁶ Dio 62.27.3.

¹⁷⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 15.57.3.

Whether or not Antonia, daughter of Claudius,¹⁷⁸ had any part in the conspiracy against Nero is uncertain, although we have a statement of Suetonius that she was put to death by Nero because she attempted a revolution.¹⁷⁹ Suetonius gives as an added reason for Nero's resentment her refusal to marry him after Poppaea's death.¹⁸⁰

In our consideration of Nero's reign we have found that the two women who exerted the most power over the Emperor, namely, his mother and Poppaea, were alike in their unscrupulousness, but quite different in their ideas of sovereignty. While Agrippina II never forgot that it was she who had made her son emperor, and had always aspired, as Nero himself is represented as asserting, to equal power for herself, *consortium imperii* (Tac. *Ann.* 14. 11. 1), Poppaea seems to have been content to wield a strong personal influence over her husband without such aspirations. At least we have no record that she listened in on the senate meetings, or that she attempted to mount the tribunal along with the Emperor. While Agrippina gave offense to her son, Poppaea seems to have held his lasting affection, *Poppaeam dilexit unice* (Suet. *Nero* 35. 3). Octavia's power, as we have seen, lay not in her favor with Nero, but with the masses; even this popularity, however, could not save her from the schemes of Poppaea. In Nero's reign we have also noted a very unusual political phenomenon—the participation of women of all classes, regardless of position or wealth, in the conspiracy to overthrow the Emperor.

¹⁷⁸ Daughter of Claudius by Paetina (Suet. *Cl.* 27.1); Tac. *Ann.* 12.2.1; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 20.8.1.

¹⁷⁹ Suet. *Nero* 35.4: quasi molitrix rerum novarum. See Chap. V, note 24.

¹⁸⁰ Suet. *Nero* 35.4. See also *Schol. ad Juv.* 8.213: A Nerone autem mater occisa est, et amita et uxor et Antoni Claudii illa (lege *Antonia, Claudii filia*) quae illi pro harum morte nubere noluit.

IV

WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE PROVINCES

In the preceding chapters we have been concerned with the political activities of women of rank at Rome under the Early Emperors. In this chapter I shall undertake to show to what extent highborn women exerted their influence even in the provinces. There was an old regulation in Rome which forbade women to be taken to foreign or allied countries.¹ A new era for women appeared under the Early Empire. Not only do we read that Livia accompanied Augustus on his frequent journeys to the East and to the West,² but we have evidence in the *De Vita Sua* of Nicolaus of Damascus³ that Julia was present in the East with Agrippa.⁴ This statement is confirmed by a series of inscriptions which will be referred to in Chapter V in connection with HONORS AND PRIVILEGES. It is possible that Julia may also have accompanied Tiberius in his Dalmatian campaign (11-10 B.C.). At any rate, we are told that she was at Aquileia.⁵ Agrippina I, moreover, was the constant companion of her husband Germanicus, not only in Germany,⁶ but also in the East,⁷ while Plancina attended her husband Cn. Piso on his appointment to the command of Syria.⁸ Judging from the cases of Sosia, wife of C. Silius,⁹ who was charged with extortion along with her husband,¹⁰ and Paxaea, wife of Pomponius Labeo, with whom

¹ Tac. Ann. 3.33.2. See Sen. Controv. 9.25.251, cf. Ulpian, Dig. 1.16.4.2.

² Tac. Ann. 3.34.12; see, however, Suet. Aug. 24.1.

³ See Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.*, 3.350 (Paris, 1874); F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, 2, Part A, 421-2; Jos. Ant. Jud. 16.2.2; V. Gardthausen, *Augustus und seine Zeit*, 1.845-6.

⁴ According to the story of Nicolaus, Julia narrowly escaped drowning in the Scamander, while Agrippa was in Paphlagonia settling matters in the Bosphorus.

⁵ Suet. Tib. 7.3.

⁶ For the account of Germanicus in Germany, see Tac. Ann. 1.34-44, 55-71.

⁷ For his activities in the East, see Tac. Ann. 2.53-61; 69-72; see Chap. II, notes 35-41.

⁸ *Ibid.* 2.55.5; see Chap. II, notes 32-41.

⁹ Silius was in command of the upper army of Germany as *legatus pro praetore* A.D. 14-21; see Tac. Ann. 1.31.2.

¹⁰ Tac. Ann. 4.19.4.

she was indicted for taking bribes while he was the governor of Mysia,¹¹ we are inclined to believe that women were quite closely associated with their husbands in the management of provinces.

A further manifestation of women's connection with the provinces is seen in the number of them who eagerly seized the opportunity, offered by Augustus, of investing in land in Egypt.¹² Among the women mentioned are Antonia, wife of the elder Drusus, Livia, wife of Augustus, Livia, wife of Drusus, son of Tiberius, Antonia, daughter of Claudius, Messalina, and Agrippina II. The names of two women of the senatorial class, Gallia Polla and Norbana Clara, also appear.¹³ Not only did women manifest interest as landowners in the provinces, but we have record of one instance of the founding of a colony by a woman. Agrippina II, Tacitus tells us, in order to display her power to the allied nations, had a colony of veterans sent out to the town of the Ubii¹⁴, where she had been born,¹⁵ and called the town by her own name.¹⁶

It was not only in civil matters in the provinces that women were involved. We find mention of them also in connection with military affairs. In the account of the disastrous campaign of Varus¹⁷ in Germany, we read that not a few women and children accompanied the Roman soldiers,¹⁸ and in another passage we find the statement that the Romans succeeded in getting past the enemy's first and second outposts, but that when they reached the third, they were discovered, because the women and

¹¹ Dio 58.24.3.

¹² M. I. Rostovtseff in *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, p. 267, says, "The growth of new *δωρεαι* or *οβολαι*, as they were now called, is one of the striking features of Egyptian life in the first century A.D. and especially in the time of Augustus and Tiberius."

¹³ Rostovtseff (*op. cit.* pp. 572-5) gives complete references to the various papyri in which these imperial and senatorial ladies are mentioned in connection with the *οβολαι*. The interest of the latter was undoubtedly due to the fact, as Rostovtseff points out, that it was difficult for men of the senatorial class to buy land in Egypt.

¹⁴ The modern Cologne.

¹⁵ Probably in A.D. 15.

¹⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 12.27.1-2; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 1.56, 4.55; Amm. Marc. 15.8.19; Suet. *Vit.* 10.3.

¹⁷ A.D. 9. Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.6, 55.3, 57.6. See also Dio 56.18.3-5, 56.19-22; Suet. *Aug.* 23.2.

¹⁸ Dio 56.20.2.

children by reason of fatigue and fear kept calling the warriors back.¹⁹

In the troublesome days in Germany in A.D. 14, we find Agrippina I sharing the fortunes of her husband Germanicus, until the mutinous spirit of the soldiers made it necessary for her and her son to flee to the Treveri for protection.²⁰ From the account of Tacitus, it appears that a long line, *agmen*, of high-born women, *feminas inlustres*, accompanied Agrippina.²¹ We might reasonably infer from this statement that it was no unusual thing for women of rank to be found in the Roman camp in fairly large numbers. The attitude of the soldiers toward the sorrowful procession, headed by Agrippina, is clear from the dismay which they felt over the lack of a fitting escort, and also from their eagerness to have Agrippina return. The following year, in spite of the defeat of the Germans by Caecina, the rumor got abroad that the Roman army had been cut off and that the Germans were on the march for Gaul. Some cowardly spirits suggested that the bridge over the Rhine be broken down.²² At this juncture, Agrippina, Tacitus tells us, took upon herself the duties of a general. She refused to permit the destruction of the bridge, and she distributed clothes to those who needed them and medical supplies to the wounded.²³ Tacitus,²⁴ referring to the account of the German wars by the elder Pliny, tells how she stood at the head of the bridge, and bestowed thanks and praise on the returning legions. Agrippina's conduct stirred the resentment of Tiberius: *Non enim simplicis eas curas, nec adversus externos (studia) militum quaeri. nihil relictum imperatoribus, ubi femina manipulos intervisat, signa adeat, largitionem templet, tamquam parum ambitiose filium ducis gregali habitu circumferat, Caesaremque Caligulam appellari velit. potioem iam apud exercitus Agrippinam quam legatos, quam duces; con-*

¹⁹ Dio 56.22.2.

²⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 1.40.2-4, 41.1-4, 44.2; cf. Dio 57.5.6.

²¹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.41.2.

²² *Ibid.* 1.69.1.

²³ *Ibid.* 1.69.2. Compare the military activity of Fulvia, who used Praeneste as her base of operations (Vell. Pat. 2.74.2-3).

²⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 1.69.3. For further reference to Pliny's account, see the younger Pliny's *Epist.* 3.5.

*pressam a mulieri seditionem, cui nomen principis obsistere non quiverit.*²⁵

Tacitus gives us an account of another woman who exerted considerable influence over the soldiers abroad. Plancia, wife of Cn. Piso, he tells us,²⁶ overstepping the bounds of feminine decorum, attended the exercises of the cavalry and the manoeuvres of the infantry in Syria. Her abusive remarks about Agrippina and Germanicus fostered an improper allegiance even among some of the better soldiers. She was instrumental, also, in raising Vonones²⁷ high in Piso's regard, for he had won her favor by numerous courtesies and gifts.²⁸

Women's activities in the provinces had assumed proportions such as these, when in A.D. 21 Caecina introduced into the senate his proposal that governors of provinces should not be permitted to take their wives along with them.²⁹ He made use of the example of Plancia to give point to his denunciation of women.³⁰ His proposal met with little favor, however, and his arguments were rather effectively refuted by Valerius Messalinus, supported by Drusus, son of Tiberius.³¹ Messalinus, nevertheless, did admit that in time of war the husband must take the field without encumbrance.³² Subsequently it appeared that even this rule was not always observed; for the general Lucius Paetus, when warring with the Armenians in A.D. 62, had with him his wife and son. While they were shut up in a fort at Arsamosata together with other women and children, with one cohort for their protection,³³ they were actually attacked by the Armenian general Vologeses.³⁴

We observe that, in spite of the deep-seated prejudice of

²⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.69.4-6.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 2.55.5; see note 8 of this chapter.

²⁷ For a short time King of Parthia; see Tac. *Ann.* 2.2 (entire), 3.2. For his subsequent history, see Tac. *Ann.* 2.4.4, 56.2, 68 (entire).

²⁸ *Ibid.* 2.58.3.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 3.33.1.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 3.33.3.

³¹ For a striking instance of women's association with soldiers in the provinces even after this time, see Dio 59.18.4; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 1.48.

³² Tac. *Ann.* 3.34.1-13.

³³ *Ibid.* 15.10.6.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 15.13.1.

Roman men against the participation of women in public affairs abroad, women had succeeded in making their influence felt to quite a remarkable degree: (1) by associating themselves with their husbands in the management of the affairs of the provinces; (2) by becoming owners of land; (3) by founding colonies; and (4) by actually participating in military activities.

V

RECOGNITION OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL POWER AND INFLUENCE

DYNASTIC UNIONS AND ALLIANCES

The recognition of women's political power and influence during the Early Empire is evident from the increasing number of dynastic unions.¹ In the period of the Late Republic we note a beginning of this practice. Caesar's marriage to Cinna's daughter,² Pompey's marriage to Julia,³ the union of Octavius with Claudia⁴ and with Scribonia,⁵ and Mark Antony's marriage to Octavia⁶ were primarily political unions.

When Octavius was eager to strengthen his position, he did not hesitate, as we know, to divorce Scribonia and marry Livia.⁷ The acquiescence of her husband Ti. Claudius Nero in this matter extended to the point of his acting as Livia's father and giving her a dowry for her new alliance.⁸ Ferrero's opinion is that Tiberius, for the sake of the interests of the aristocracy, was willing to give up Livia, in order that the old Roman nobility might reacquire through the prestige and cleverness of a woman what it had not been able to maintain by force of arms.⁹ Again, Augustus, wishing to invest Agrippa with greater dignity, compelled him to divorce his wife Marcella,¹⁰ although she was the Emperor's own niece, and to marry his daughter Julia.¹¹

¹ "Women simply because of position or influence may be asked to sacrifice themselves for the furtherance of political ends." (Tenney Frank, *Aspects of Social Behavior in Ancient Rome*, p. 31.)

² Suet. *Jul.* 1. 1.

³ *Ibid.* 1.21.

⁴ Vell. Pat. 2.65.2; Suet. *Aug.* 62.1.

⁵ App. *B.C.* 5.53; Suet. *Aug.* 62.2.

⁶ Dio 50.26.1; Vell. Pat. 2.78.1; Plut. *Ant.* 88.

⁷ Suet. *Aug.* 62.2. Suetonius, quoting Augustus's own words, gives as the reason for his divorcing Scribonia, *perlaesus morum perversitatem eius*.

⁸ Vell. Pat. 2.79.2; Suet. *Tib.* 4.3; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 1.23. See also Joann. Antioch., exc. Salmas. 78 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.*, 4.569).

⁹ *The Women of the Caesars*, p. 46.

¹⁰ Suet. *Aug.* 63.1. Marcella was later given in marriage by Augustus to Iullus Antonius, son of Mark Antony (Vell. Pat. 2.100.4). See Chap. I, note 47, for the relations of Julia, daughter of Augustus, with this same Antonius.

¹¹ Suet. *Aug.* 63.1; Dio 54.6.5; Tac. *Ann.* 4.40.9; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 15.10.2. For earlier engagements of Julia for political reasons, see Dio 51.15.5; Pliny *H. N.* 4.11; Suet. *Aug.* 63.1-2.

"It is certain," says Hardy,¹² "that Augustus hoped to secure from this marriage a settlement of the succession." After Agrippa's death, Augustus gave Julia in marriage to Tiberius, compelling the latter to divorce his beloved wife Vipsania Agrippina.¹³

During the reign of Tiberius, Sejanus was honored by the betrothal of his daughter to Drusus, son of Claudius.¹⁴ For himself, as we have already observed, he sought permission to marry Livilla, widow of Drusus Caesar, the Emperor's son, undoubtedly with a view to gaining the Empire.¹⁵ Whether he actually married her or her daughter Julia, is, as we have seen, a debatable question.¹⁶

Caligula, in order to strengthen his chances of succeeding Tiberius, worked his way, as we have already noted in Chapter III, into the favor of Macro, commander of the pretorian guard, through his wife Ennia.¹⁷ We observed also that M. Aemilius Lepidus, during Caligula's reign aimed to pave a way for himself to the throne through Agrippina's means, and she endeavored to make Lepidus her friend with the same view.¹⁸ Claudius, as has been shown, had special legislation passed,¹⁹ that he might marry his niece Agrippina and unite the noble stocks of the Julian and the Claudian families,²⁰ on the ground that it was for the interest of the state.²¹ Mention has already been made of Agrippina's efforts to have Octavia betrothed to her son Domitian.²² The political importance of Octavia may be judged from the remark made by Burrus, when Nero divorced her. Strongly opposing the action he said, "Well, then, give her back her

¹² E. G. Hardy, *Mon. Ancyr.*, p. 73.

¹³ Dio 54.35.4, 31.2; Suet. *Aug.* 63.2, *Tib.* 7.2; Tac. *Ann.* 1.12.6, 4.40.9; Vell. Pat. 2.96.1.

¹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 3.29.5. Drusus, son of Claudius and Urgulanilla, died in boyhood, soon after the actual betrothal (Suet. *Cl.* 27.1).

¹⁵ See Chap. II, notes 107, 128-30.

¹⁶ See Chap. II, note 136.

¹⁷ See Chap. III, note 5.

¹⁸ See Chap. III, notes 9, 11, 12.

¹⁹ See Chap. III, note 74.

²⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 12.2.3.

²¹ Suet. *Cl.* 26.3.

²² See Chap. III, note 94. Octavia was temporarily adopted into another family in order to avoid the appearance of uniting a brother and a sister in marriage (Dio 60.33.22).

dowry," by which he meant the sovereignty.²³ C. Piso, leader of the conspiracy against Nero, was to be carried off to camp; while to win the favor of the multitude, we are told, he was to be accompanied by Antonia, daughter of Claudius Caesar.²⁴

Not only did men increase their prestige and their political power by alliances with influential women, but special privileges were often accorded them by reason of their connection with women of rank. This is evident from the following instances: Quintilius Varus, formerly governor of Syria,²⁵ succeeded to the command in Germany,²⁶ a position which he probably owed to his marriage with Claudia Pulchra, a grandniece of the Emperor Augustus.²⁷ Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, during the reign of Tiberius, held the office of consul for a whole year, since he was the husband of Agrippina, daughter of Germanicus, but the rest of the consuls held office only so long as it pleased Tiberius.²⁸ Claudius gave triumphal ornaments to L. Junius Silanus, who was betrothed to his daughter, although he was under age.²⁹ Later Claudius granted to Silanus as well as to Cn. Pompeius Magnus, when they became his sons-in-law, permission to stand for certain offices five years earlier than was customary.³⁰

It is equally true that disaster often followed in the wake of such connections. Asinius Gallus, an object of hatred to Tiberius because of his marriage to Vipsania,³¹ whom Tiberius had been forced to divorce, met his death through the latter's efforts.³² Antei-us, who was hated by Nero because of his attachment to Agrippina,³³ readily fell a victim to the accusations of the in-

²³ Dio 62.13.2. See also Joann. Antioch., exc. *Virt.* 90 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.* 4.809): τὴν αὐτοῦ γαμέτην Ὀκταβίαν, . . . δι' ἣν εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν οὐχ ἥμισυ παρεληλύθει, πρῶτον μὲν ἀπεπέμψατο, ἔπειτα καὶ ἀπέκτεινεν.

²⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 15.53.4, quoting C. Plinius Secundus. Tacitus himself considers this story improbable. See Chap. III, note 179.

²⁵ Vell. Pat. 2.117.2.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 2.117.3.

²⁷ *Prosopograph. imp. Rom.* 3.118-20. In Tac. *Ann.* 4.52.1, Claudia is called *sobrīna Agrippinae*.

²⁸ Dio 58.20.1. Under the Early Emperors the usual tenure of the office of consul did not extend beyond a few months. For the beginning of this practice, see Dio 43.46 (entire).

²⁹ Suet. *Cl.* 24.3; cf. Dio 60.31.7; Tac. *Ann.* 12.3.2.

³⁰ Dio 60.5.8.

³¹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.12.6.

³² Dio 57.2.6-7, 58.3.1-6, 58.23.6.

³³ Tac. *Ann.* 16.14.3.

former Sosianus,³⁴ while Rufrius Crispinus owed his banishment by Nero chiefly to the fact that he was once Poppaea's husband.³⁵

Thus it is evident that in the Early Empire an alliance with a distinguished woman was of considerable importance in establishing power and prestige and in securing special privileges. On the other hand, as we have seen above, such an alliance might be the direct cause of disaster.

HONORS AND PRIVILEGES

De Serviez Roergas in his preface to *The Roman Empresses* says, "While the Republic of Rome maintained her liberties, the Roman ladies were not distinguished one from another except by their beauty and their wit, their virtue and their courage. But, from the time that the emperors made themselves absolute masters of the state, their wives shared with them their grandeur, their glory, and their power; the Roman people, being then given up to flattery as much as they had formerly been jealous of their liberty, strove to give the empresses pompous and magnificent titles and to decree them extraordinary and excessive honors."³⁶

In this chapter I propose to show how the Early Empresses were thus honored in a political way both at Rome and in the provinces. In Chapter VII under WOMEN IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE STATE I shall discuss the religious honors which they enjoyed. The extraordinary title of *Augusta* was conferred not only upon Livia,³⁷ but upon Antonia,³⁸ Agrippina II,³⁹ Drusilla,⁴⁰

³⁴ *Ibid.* 16.14.4-5.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 15.71.8; cf. Dio 61.11.2.

³⁶ English translation, published by H. S. Nichols, N. Y., 1913; see bibliography.

³⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 1.8.2; cf. Dio 56.46.1. This title was conferred by the senate after the death of Augustus, according to the provisions of his will.

³⁸ According to Suet. *Cl.* 11.2, this honor was conferred upon Antonia by Claudius after her death. Suetonius adds that Antonia had declined the title during her lifetime. According to Dio 59.3.4, Gaius thus saluted his grandmother while she lived. Dio's statement is confirmed by an Arval Table of Jan. 31, A.D. 38, recording a sacrifice on her birthday, *CIL* 6.2028C.

³⁹ The first empress to be styled *Augusta* during her husband's lifetime. This title was conferred by the senate, according to Tac. *Ann.* 12.26.2; according to Dio 60.33.2*, by Claudius.

⁴⁰ Sister of Gaius. Upon her death all the honors that had been bestowed upon Livia were voted to her (Dio 59.11.2).

Octavia,⁴¹ Poppaea,⁴² and even upon her infant daughter Claudia.⁴³ This title appears in inscriptions and also upon coins.⁴⁴ We find that Livia, after her adoption into the Julian family by the will of Augustus in A.D. 14,⁴⁵ appeared on coins as JULIA AUGUSTA,⁴⁶ while Antonia Minor is found on a coin of Claudius as ANTONIA AUGUSTA, SACERDOS DIVI AUGUSTI.⁴⁷ Although the title *Augusta* was withheld from Messalina by Claudius,⁴⁸ we have evidence of its use on some provincial coins.⁴⁹ Agrippina II was styled AGRIPPINA AUGUSTA on coins minted by both Claudius⁵⁰ and Nero.⁵¹ In addition to this she had the unusual honor⁵² of having her image appear on coins beside that of her husband Claudius during the last months of his reign,⁵³ and beside the image of her son Nero during his first six months as emperor.⁵⁴

As if the title of *Augusta* were not sufficient distinction for Livia, some flatterers in the senate, shortly after the death of Augustus, proposed the appellation *Parens*, others *Mater Patriae*, and many more proposed that after the name Caesar, i.e., Tiberius, the words *Juliae filius* should be added.⁵⁵ These suggestions were vetoed by Tiberius,⁵⁶ but the inscription AUGUSTA MATER PATRIAE actually occurs on the reverse⁵⁷ of a

⁴¹ Wife of Nero; called *Octavia Augusta* in Dio 62.13.1.

⁴² Married to Nero after the divorcement of Octavia. Nero bestowed the title at the birth of the child Claudia (Tac. *Ann.* 15.23.1).

⁴³ Named *Claudia Augusta* at birth (Tac. *Ann.* 15.23.1; cf. Suet. *Nero* 35.3).

⁴⁴ For LIVIA AUGUSTA, see Orelli 1.613, 615, 618, 1320, 1328, 1724, 2937. For ANTONIA AUGUSTA and JULIA AUGUSTA AGRIPPINA, see Orelli 1.650; cf. *CIL* 6. 921. For POPPAEA AUGUSTA, see *CIL* 11.1331.

⁴⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.8.2.

⁴⁶ See Cohen, *Monnaie de l'Emp. Rom.*², 1.169, no. 3.

⁴⁷ See Mattingly and Sydenham, *Roman Imp. Coinage*, 1.132, nos. 80, 82.

⁴⁸ Dio 60.12.5.

⁴⁹ E.g. at Caesarea in Cappadocia, MESSALINA AUGUSTA (Mattingly and Sydenham, 1.128, no. 59).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 1.134, nos. 92, 100.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 1.145, no. 11.

⁵² Eckhel, *Doct. Num.* 6.257.

⁵³ Mattingly and Sydenham, 1.127, no. 54.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 1.145, no. 9. Consult Cohen, *op. cit.*, 1.169-316, for an extensive treatment of the appearance of the women of the Julian-Claudian dynasty on coins.

⁵⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.14.1-2.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 1.14.3; according to Tiberius, there should be some limit to the honors bestowed on women.

⁵⁷ On the obverse is a head of Augustus.

bronze coin of Leptis along with a seated figure of Livia,⁵⁸ while a coin from Spain bears the inscription JULIA AUGUSTA GENETRIX ORBIS.⁵⁹ Agrippina II also received especial distinction, for she was called *Optima Mater*, this being the watchword that Nero gave to the tribune on guard on the first day of his rule.⁶⁰

In public works at Rome, women were also marked out for distinction. We find mention in our authors of statues of Livia,⁶¹ wife of Augustus, of Livia,⁶² wife of Drusus, of Messalina,⁶³ of Agrippina II,⁶⁴ of Poppaea,⁶⁵ and of Octavia.⁶⁶ Statues of Vestal Virgins were quite common, many of them erected in gratitude for their influence in securing political appointments.⁶⁷ The Vestals appear also in the processional decoration of one of the finest and most important works of art that has come down to us, the Ara Pacis.⁶⁸ On this altar Livia, too, was glorified, being represented with her family accompanying Augustus.⁶⁹

Public buildings⁷⁰ erected in their honor likewise attest the political importance of women. The Porticus Liviae⁷¹ begun by Augustus on the site of the house of Vedius Pollio on the Esquiline Hill in 15 B.C. and finished and dedicated in 7 B.C. was a magnificent tribute to the Empress. The Macellum Liviae on the Esquiline,⁷² also erected by Augustus, became a very important market. Although an arch was voted to Livia by the

⁵⁸ See Cohen, *op. cit.*, 1.165, no. 807.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 1.169, no. 3.

⁶⁰ Suet. *Nero* 9; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 13.2.5.

⁶¹ Dio 55.2.5. After the death of Drusus, statues were voted to Livia to console her.

⁶² Tac. *Ann.* 6.2.1.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 11.38.4.

⁶⁴ Dio 61.16.2^a.

⁶⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 14.61.1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* For a full description of the statues of the imperial women of the Julian-Claudian period, see Bernoulli, *Römische Ikonographie*, 2, part 1.

⁶⁷ Orelli 1.2236.

⁶⁸ See Mrs. A. Strong's *Roman Sculpture*, pp. 39-58.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 49-50.

⁷⁰ Temples and shrines, dedicated to women, will be discussed in Chap. VII under WOMEN IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE STATE.

⁷¹ Dio 54.23.6, 55.8.2; Suet. *Aug.* 29.4; Ovid *Fasti* 6.639, *Ars* 1.71; Pliny *H. N.* 14.11; Pliny *Epist.* 1.5.9; Strabo 5.236. No remains of it have come to light; see Platner and Ashby, p. 423.

⁷² Probably to be identified with τὸ τεμένισμα τὸ Διονυσίου ὠρομασμένον (Dio 55.8.2); see Platner and Ashby, p. 322.

senate, a distinction which was conferred upon no other woman,⁷³ it was never erected, for Tiberius had promised to construct it at his own expense and failed to keep his promise.⁷⁴ The Porticus Octaviae, which, as we have learned in Chapter I,⁷⁵ was dedicated to Octavia by Augustus, clearly indicates the high regard and esteem which the Emperor felt for his sister and his willingness to give her public recognition.

In the public records of the time, the so-called *acta diurna*,⁷⁶ the doings of women as well as those of men were recorded, as we may infer from statements found in Dio and in Tacitus. The former tells us⁷⁷ that an entry was made to the effect that Livia could at any time receive members of the senate and such of the people as wished to greet her in her house. A similar statement appears in this same author regarding Agrippina II.⁷⁸ Tacitus, commenting on the failure of Antonia to appear in public when the ashes of Germanicus were being brought to Rome, says that neither in the histories nor in the journals⁷⁹ of the time could he find that Antonia had taken any conspicuous part in the proceedings, although the names of Agrippina, Drusus, Claudius, and all the other relatives were specifically mentioned.⁸⁰

So far as public allegiance to the women of the imperial household was concerned, we find at least one striking instance of its expression. Cn. Piso, in a memorandum written before his death, asserted that throughout his life he had been loyal to Tiberius and no less devoted to his mother,⁸¹ thus placing Livia on an equality with her son in the matter of allegiance. Tiberius himself encouraged proper regard for Livia by the inclusion of her name along with his own and that of Augustus in his revival

⁷³ Dio 58.2.3.

⁷⁴ Dio 58.2.6.

⁷⁵ See note 30. For its destruction by fire in A.D. 80, see Dio 66.24.2.

⁷⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 13.31.1. The *acta diurna* was a kind of official gazette, instituted by Julius Caesar, in which important daily events of political, legal, or other nature were recorded; see Suet. *Jul.* 20.1; Mommsen, *Staatsr.* 2^a.813.

⁷⁷ Dio 57.12.2.

⁷⁸ Dio 60.33.1.

⁷⁹ Here called *diurna actorum scriptura*.

⁸⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 3.3.2.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* 3.16.5.

of the law against *maiestas*.⁸² This law was known by the same name to antiquity, Tacitus says,⁸³ but it applied to a different class of offenses, such as the betrayal of an army, the stirring up of sedition among the people, or to any act of public conduct by which the majesty of the Roman people might be impaired; deeds were censured, but words passed unpunished. Augustus, for the first time, applied the law to libellous writings.⁸⁴ Tiberius went still farther. Whatever by ancient law had been an offense against the Roman people became now a personal offense against the emperor, and every misdemeanor against the emperor was a misdemeanor against the majesty of the people.⁸⁵ Tiberius, as emperor, according to Dio,⁸⁶ inflicted the most severe punishment on anyone who was summoned on a charge of doing or saying anything unsuitable against not only Augustus, but also against himself and his mother Livia.⁸⁷ He thus put Livia on a level with himself in substituting her person as well as his for the commonwealth as a whole.

Gaius, the successor of Tiberius, carrying matters still farther, allowed his sisters to share with him the honor of receiving the oaths of allegiance⁸⁸ that were sworn to his rule. He caused their names to be included in all oaths, in the formula: *Neque me liberosque meos cariores habeo quam Gaium habeo et sorores eius*. The consuls, too, in making propositions to the senate were required to begin with the set formula: *Quod bonum felixque sit C. Caesari sororibusque eius*.⁸⁹ In Dio we find the statement that the consuls for the year A.D. 38 took such oaths along with the usual ones.⁹⁰ The extreme devotion of Gaius to his sister Drusilla

⁸² *Ibid.* 1.72.3. For the history of this law, see Smith's *Dict. of Greek and Roman Antiquities*.

⁸³ Tac. *Ann.* 1.72.3.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 1.72.4; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 55.

⁸⁵ See G. G. Ramsay's translation of *The Annals of Tacitus*, 1.85, fn. 4.

⁸⁶ Dio 57.19.1.

⁸⁷ For an illustration, see Tac. *Ann.* 2.50.1-5. In this instance Tiberius required that a distinction should be made between blasphemous remarks about Augustus, and those directed against himself and Livia. He acquitted the defendant.

⁸⁸ Dio 59.3.4; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.72.2, for the attitude of Tiberius toward these oaths of allegiance.

⁸⁹ Suet. *Cal.* 15.3.

⁹⁰ Dio 59.9.2.

caused him to name her as heir to his possessions and even to his throne.⁹¹

Another mark of public distinction, the right to use the *carpentum*⁹² as a state carriage,⁹³ a right which could be obtained only by a decree of the senate, was enjoyed by at least three of the empresses, Livia, Messalina, and Agrippina II, as well as by the Vestal Virgins.⁹⁴ No specific instance of its use is mentioned in connection with Livia,⁹⁵ but we read in Suetonius⁹⁶ that Messalina, in the triumphal procession of Claudius on his return from Britain, rode behind the Emperor's chariot in a *carpentum*. Agrippina II, as the wife of Claudius, exalted her own position to such an extent, according to Tacitus,⁹⁷ that she would drive in a *carpentum* to the Capitol, an honor, he adds, which in the old days had been reserved for the priests and the divine images. Agrippina also enjoyed special distinction when Nero became emperor, for he would often ride with her through the streets in her litter;⁹⁸ more commonly, however, she would be carried, and he would walk beside her.⁹⁹ The privilege of a military guard which had been granted to Agrippina as the wife of Claudius was continued for a short time under Nero, until the latter, enraged at her efforts in behalf of Octavia,¹⁰⁰ withdrew not only this guard, but an additional escort of Germans which had been granted to her.¹⁰¹ Not a single soldier would he allow to attend her, declaring that no one except the emperor might have a military guard.¹⁰²

From the above evidence it seems quite clear that at Rome recognition of women's political power and influence led men to

⁹¹ See Chap. III, note 6.

⁹² See Prop. 4(5).8.23; Ovid, *Fasti* 1.619.

⁹³ The use of the *carpentum* to carry images in the Circensian games will be treated in Chap. VII under RECOGNITION AFTER DEATH.

⁹⁴ See *Lex Jul. Municip.* 62 (Dessau 2, part 1, 494) for the Vestals' right to this distinction.

⁹⁵ See Dio 60.22.2, where the enjoyment of this privilege by Livia is implied.

⁹⁶ Suet. *Cl.* 17.3; cf. Dio 60.22.2; see Chap. VI, note 80.

⁹⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 12.42.3; cf. Dio 60.33.2¹: τιμὰς ἄλλας τε καὶ τὸ καρπέντω ἐν ταῖς πανηγύρεσι χρῆσθαι παρὰ τῆς βουλῆς ἔλαβεν.

⁹⁸ Suet. *Nero* 9.

⁹⁹ Dio 61.3.2.

¹⁰⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 13.18.3; see Chap. III, note 135.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* 13.18.4.

¹⁰² Dio 61.8.4.

bestow upon them signal marks of honor, such as titles of distinction, representation on coins and in works of art, public buildings erected in their honor, mention in public records, recognition in oaths of allegiance and in the provisions of the law of *maiestas*, and privileges such as the use of the *carpentum* and of a military guard.

In the provinces political distinctions were not so numerous. At Thespieae,¹⁰³ and at Delphi,¹⁰⁴ statues were set up to honor Agrippa and Julia and their children. We have evidence that Agrippina II was also honored with a statue at Delphi.¹⁰⁵ At Ephesus,¹⁰⁶ the southern entrance gate of the Agora, completed in 4/3 B.C., and dedicated to Augustus, Agrippa, Livia, and Julia, was adorned with the statues of all four. Numerous inscriptions found on many of the Aegean islands, for example, Andros,¹⁰⁷ Delos,¹⁰⁸ Mytilene,¹⁰⁹ and Samos,¹¹⁰ also show that Julia was honored in the East along with her husband.

When Germanicus and Agrippina were in the East, they were both presented, according to Tacitus,¹¹¹ with massive golden crowns at a banquet given by the king of the Nabataei. It is evident that even in the provinces the imperial women were held in high regard politically, and were the recipients of exceptional honors.

We conclude from our investigation that in the Early Empire men were willing to acknowledge the political power and influence of women, not only at Rome, but also abroad, by establishing unions and alliances with them, and by bestowing upon them high honors and privileges.

¹⁰³ See A. Plassart, *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 50.447-8, nos. 88-9.

¹⁰⁴ Dittenberger³ 2, no. 779.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* no. 809: Σεβαστῆν Ἀγριππείαν, | Σεβαστοῦ Νέρωνος μητέ | ρα, Δελφῶν ἃ πόλις.

¹⁰⁶ Dessau 8897.

¹⁰⁷ *CIG* 12.5.740.

¹⁰⁸ Dittenberger³ 2.777.

¹⁰⁹ *CIG* 12.2.204.

¹¹⁰ *IGR* 4.1717.

¹¹¹ Tac. *Ann.* 2.57.5.

VI

WOMEN IN SOCIAL LIFE OF A PUBLIC CHARACTER

STATE FEASTS

It is my purpose in this chapter to show the extent of the participation of women of high station in the public social life of the Early Empire. I shall first deal with the state feasts, and then with the various kinds of public games and stage plays. Our authors furnish us with evidence that women of rank participated in state feasts not only as guests, but also as hostesses. Each one of the emperors with whose reigns we are concerned gave lavish banquets.¹ The references which specifically mention the women as guests, although comparatively few in number, incline us to believe that the attendance of ladies of noble birth was by no means unusual.²

During the reign of Augustus in 12 B.C. the senate, in order to honor the Emperor, gave bachelors and spinsters the right to attend banquets along with other people on his birthday.³ This passage would seem to indicate that married men and women were the naturally privileged guests. At the feasts of Augustus, the guests were frequently supplied with the means of playing at dice or at "odd and even." Undoubtedly the women, too, participated, for Suetonius quotes Augustus as saying that he was sending his daughter Julia two hundred and fifty denarii, the sum which he had given to each of his guests for this purpose.⁴

In A.D. 37, when Caligula was dedicating the shrine of Augustus, the senators as well as their wives were banqueted.⁵ Two years later, when he was celebrating the birthday of Drusilla,

¹ Suet. *Aug.* 74.75; cf. Dio 54.2.3; Suet. *Tib.* 20, *Cal.* 17.2, *Cl.* 32; Tac. *Ann.* 12.57.3; Dio 61.13.1. See, however, Suet. *Nero* 16.2.

² See Nepos, *Praef.* 6: *Quem enim Romanorum pudet uxorem ducere in convivium?* The invitation of the sons and daughters of distinguished men to the imperial board along with the Emperor's own children (Suet. *Cl.* 32) would make such association later as adults seem quite natural.

³ Dio 54.30.5.

⁴ Suet. *Aug.* 71.4.

⁵ Dio 59.7.1. See Chap. II, note 47.

Caligula feasted the populace and gave presents to the senators and their wives.⁶ Suetonius,⁷ undoubtedly referring to these same two occasions, makes mention, among the guests, of the equestrian order as well as the senate, together with their wives and children. In another passage,⁸ Suetonius speaks of the respective positions occupied by the sisters and the wife of Caligula at a large banquet. The former, he says, were placed in turn below the Emperor, while his wife reclined⁹ above.¹⁰ Judging from the statement of Suetonius in a later chapter,¹¹ we infer that Caligula made a point of inviting noble ladies to dinner parties along with their husbands.

Claudius, upon the occasion of his dedication of the restored theatre of Pompey, shortly after his accession, banqueted the senators and their wives,¹² while the following year some of the praetors, of their own free will and not because of any decree, publicly celebrated the birthday of Messalina.¹³ At the banquet which Claudius gave close to the outlet of the Fucine Lake we know that Agrippina was present¹⁴ in gorgeous array,¹⁵ and we feel safe in assuming that many noble ladies were also in attendance. Claudius, apparently, was in the habit of inviting the wives of prominent men to dinner parties. This seems evident from the fact that on one occasion he asked Scipio why he had not brought his wife with him.¹⁶ In his absentmindedness,¹⁷ the Emperor had forgotten that Scipio's wife Poppaea had been driven to suicide by Messalina.¹⁸

⁶ Dio 59.13.9. See also Dio 59.11.3, for the decree of the senate regarding this feast. For presents to women, cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 19.1.

⁷ Suet. *Cal.* 17.2.

⁸ Suet. *Cal.* 24.1.

⁹ By the time of Augustus, women reclined like the men. Val. Max. 2.1.2; Ovid, *Ars* 1.566, *Am.* 1.14.16: *ibis ut accumbas*; Mart. 10.98.4.

¹⁰ The place of honor called *consularis*. See Plut. *Quaest. Conviv.* 1.3.1, and Hor. *Sat.* 2.8.20-4.

¹¹ Suet. *Cal.* 36.1-2.

¹² Dio 60.7.4; cf. Suet. *Cl.* 21.1.

¹³ Dio 60.12.4.

¹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 12.57.3-4. See note 64 of this chapter, and Chap. III, note 85.

¹⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 12.56.5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 3.74.2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 11.2.5; cf. 11.38.2-4. Suetonius (*Cl.* 39.1-2) also gives instances of this quality, which he calls by the Greek name *perewpla*. For Scipio, see Tac. *Ann.* 3.74.2.

¹⁸ See Chap. III, note 59.

Nero, at a banquet held during the Quinquatria,¹⁹ showed his mother Agrippina special honor by placing her above himself at the table.²⁰ This banquet was given by the future emperor Otho²¹ in order to avert suspicion.

The above evidence seems to prove quite conclusively that women of rank were frequently guests at the state feasts. Dio is our sole authority for the statement that noble women were also at times hostesses. On the occasion of the celebration of the equestrian triumph of Tiberius,²² Livia, together with Julia, gave a dinner to the women.²³ Two years later, when Tiberius celebrated his triumph over the Germans,²⁴ and, in company with his mother, dedicated the precinct of Livia,²⁵ he gave a banquet to the senate on the Capitol, and she gave one on her own account to the women.²⁶ After the accession of Tiberius, when Livia was dedicating an image to Augustus,²⁷ she wished, in honor of this event, to give a banquet to the senate and the knights, together with their wives. Tiberius, however, refused her permission to do this, until the senate had voted on it, and not even then did he allow her to receive the men at dinner; instead, he entertained the men, and she the women.²⁸ No such restraint seems to have been placed upon Messalina, for, according to Dio's account,²⁹ after her marriage to Silius, she gave a notorious banquet and carried on a most licentious revel.

¹⁹ See J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, 3², 434-5. Owing to a false etymology, this feast, which originally lasted for only one day, was regarded as a five-day festival. Under the later Republic and the Empire it was observed March 19-23.

²⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 14.4.8; cf. Suet. *Nero* 34.2; Dio 61.13.1. Dio mentions several costly dinners given in Agrippina's honor.

²¹ Suet. *Otho* 3.1. As Emperor, Otho gave a dinner to eighty senators, some of whom were attended by their wives (Plut. *Otho* 3.5).

²² The *ovatio* in 9 B.C. in honor of his victory over the Dalmatians and the Pannonians. See Dio 55.2.4, and cf. 54.31.2-4; Vell. Pat. 2.96.2-3; Suet. *Tib.* 9.2.

²³ Dio 55.2.4.

²⁴ Vell. Pat. 2.97.4: Tum alter triumphus cum altero consulatu ei oblatu est. See also Suet. *Tib.* 9.2.

²⁵ See Chap. V, note 72.

²⁶ Dio 55.8.2.

²⁷ See Chap. II, note 48.

²⁸ Dio 57.12.5.

²⁹ Dio 60.31.4; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 11.31.4-6; see also Sen. *Epist.* 95.21.

We infer from the instances cited above that women of station in the Early Empire were not only privileged to participate as guests in the state feasts, which were held to celebrate such occasions as dedications of shrines, triumphs, and birthdays of the imperial family, but that they enjoyed a surprising amount of social independence in the rôle of hostesses.

SPECTACLES

Although all games were originally, at least, adjuncts to religious festivals out of which they had grown,³⁰ their social importance early became so predominant as to require our special study. The religious aspect of the spectacles, as it survived in the great procession from the Capitol, with the statues of gods and of deified humanity, I shall discuss in Chapter VII under WOMEN IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE STATE.

In this chapter it is my purpose to show how a desire for the spectacles, which seem to have been intended primarily for the masses, gradually permeated the higher orders of society at Rome, taking such a hold upon them that women as well as men attended the shows in large numbers, and before the end of Nero's reign actually appeared in public as performers in the arena and on the stage. For convenience, I shall discuss the subject under two general headings, *Ludi Circenses*, and *Ludi Scaenici*. Under the first heading I shall include *munera*, *naumachiae*, *agones*, and *triumphi*; under the second, *Atellanae*, *mimi*, *pantomimi*, *tragoediae*, and *comoediae*.

The rapid increase in the number of public spectacles at Rome³¹ may be judged from the fact that, although there had been but a single festival, the national *Ludi Romani*,³² and a single Circus in the early days of the Republic, by the close of this period the *ludi stativi*³³ occupied seventy-six days, and this number did not include gladiatorial displays and many extraordinary entertainments.³⁴ *Panem et circenses*³⁵ became the cry,

³⁰ Sandys, *A Companion to Latin Studies*³, §778.

³¹ The increase began toward the end of the 3rd century B.C. See Livy 1.35.

³² Festus, s.v. *Magnos ludos*.

³³ *Ibid.* s.v. *Feriae statae*, and Macr. *Sat.* 1.16.5-6.

³⁴ Sandys, *op. cit.*, §779-80.

³⁵ Juv. 10.81; cf. Dio Chrysost. *Or.* 21, p. 271 (M).

and the Early Emperors,³⁶ with the exception of Tiberius,³⁷ yielded to it generously, evidently agreeing with the retort of Pylades to Augustus, when the latter reproached him for quarreling with Bathyllus, a fellow artist: "It is to your advantage, Caesar, for the people to waste their time on us."³⁸

Ludi Circenses

The *Ludi Circenses* were extremely popular. The partisanship of the Early Emperors, especially of Caligula and Nero,³⁹ did much to establish the vogue. We are not surprised, therefore, to read that women swarmed the shows like bees or a long line of ants.⁴⁰ At these games the women were privileged to sit with the men.⁴¹ So far as the imperial ladies were concerned, places were reserved for them in the imperial box or *pulvinar*,⁴² where Augustus sometimes viewed the games with them.⁴³ Apparently there was no restriction placed upon them by the Emperor with regard to male society, for on one occasion, we are told, Augustus sent a message to his daughter Julia, pointing out to her the contrast between the train of wild youth who surrounded her, and the worthy elderly men who accompanied Livia.⁴⁴ Dio makes mention of the fact that Caligula assigned to his sisters the privilege of witnessing games in the Circus with him from the imperial seats,⁴⁵ and that at the games held in honor of the dedication of the shrine of Augustus,⁴⁶ his sisters viewed the chariot

³⁶ For an enumeration of the spectacles given by Augustus, see *Mon. Ancyr.* 4.22-3, Suet. *Aug.* 43-5; by Caligula, see Suet. *Cal.* 18; by Claudius, see Suet. *Cl.* 21, Dio 60.13.1; by Nero, see Suet. *Nero* 11-2.

³⁷ Suet. *Tib.* 47: cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.62.3. See, however, Dio 57.11.5, for his attendance upon the spectacles.

³⁸ Dio 54.17.5; cf. Macr. *Sat.* 2.7.19.

³⁹ Both these emperors favored the "green" syndicate (Suet. *Cal.* 55.2, *Nero* 22.1; Juv. 11.197-201).

⁴⁰ Ovid, *Ars* 1.93-7; cf. *ibid.* 1.89, 164, 171-4.

⁴¹ Ovid, *Trist.* 2.284, *Ars* 1.139, *Am.* 3.2.19; Juv. 11.201-2.

⁴² See Smith's *Dict. of Ant. s.v.*, and Suet. *Cl.* 4.3; cf. Suet. *Jul.* 76.1, where the term *suggestum* is used. See also *Mon. Ancyr.* 4.19.

⁴³ Suet. *Aug.* 45.1. Usually, however, he watched the games from the upper rooms in the houses of his friends and freedmen.

⁴⁴ Macr. *Sat.* 5.6.

⁴⁵ Dio 59.3.4.

⁴⁶ A.D. 37, Dio 59.9.1; cf. Chap. VII, note 74, and Chap. II, note 47.

race from the front seat together with him and his fellow priests of the Augustan order.⁴⁷ Antonia, too, was similarly honored, for Caligula conferred upon her all the privileges of the Vestal Virgins.⁴⁸ After the victory of Claudius in Britain, in A.D. 43, the senate voted to Messalina the same privilege that Livia had enjoyed of occupying the front seat.⁴⁹ Later Agrippina II was similarly honored.⁵⁰

(All the greater spectacles began at sunrise and lasted until sundown.⁵¹ In Suetonius we read that even women of rank, *matronae*,⁵² showed such zeal that they arrived in the middle of the night to secure free seats.) More than twenty of them, he tells us, with the same number of knights, were crushed to death, when the throng of early comers was ejected from the Circus by Caligula, because their noise had disturbed his rest.⁵³

We read, too, about performances which lasted all night. This was true of the *Ludi Saeculares*, revived by Augustus in 17 B.C. During the celebration of these games the Emperor forbade young men and young women to attend any spectacle at night except in company with some adult relative.⁵⁴ Nero's quinquennial feast, called *Neronia*,⁵⁵ instituted in A.D. 60, also seems to have lasted through the night.⁵⁶ Objections on the score of possible immorality were met by the reply that because of the blaze of light no illicit conduct could be concealed.⁵⁷

Not only did the *Ludi Circenses* prove alluring to women of high station. According to Juvenal,⁵⁸ the gladiatorial combats were also a strong attraction. Juvenal mentions Eppia, a senator's wife, who felt no scruples about deserting her home and

⁴⁷ Dio 59.7.4.

⁴⁸ Dio 59.3.4.

⁴⁹ Dio 60.22.2.

⁵⁰ Dio 60.33.12.

⁵¹ Celsus, *De re med.* 1.3: qui vero toto die in vehiculo vel in spectaculis sedet; cf. Suet. *Cal.* 18.3.

⁵² This word very early acquired the added idea of moral or social dignity or rank. See Plaut. *Cist.* 1.1.26; Enn. trag. *Medea*, line 294 (Vahlen).

⁵³ Suet. *Cal.* 26.4.

⁵⁴ Suet. *Aug.* 31.4; see Chap. VII, note 54.

⁵⁵ Suet. *Nero* 12.3; see also Tac. *Ann.* 14.20.1-8, 16.4.1; Dio 61.21.1.

⁵⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 14.20.8, 16.5.2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 14.21.6; cf. Suet. *Dom.* 4.1; Ovid, *Fasti* 5.361, 367-8; Lucil. *Sat.* 1.23. For the use of illumination at the *Floralia*, see Dio 58.19.1.

⁵⁸ Juvenal 6.78-113.

her husband, in order to follow a gladiator to the Nile. Petronius, in his *Satyricon* (c. 126), seems to echo this opinion: *arenarius aliquas accendit aut perfusus pulvere mulio aut histrio*. (At the combats of the gladiators, the so-called *munera*, held for the most part in the amphitheatre, the imperial ladies and the Vestal Virgins shared the *podium* with the emperor.⁵⁹ Women, in general, in conformity with the regulations of Augustus,⁶⁰ were not permitted to sit with the men, but were allowed to view these shows only from the upper seats, although it had been the custom, Suetonius says, for men and women to sit together at such spectacles.)

Another form of public entertainment which attracted both sexes was the naval fight. When Augustus presented his *naumachia* on an artificial lake near the Tiber,⁶¹ men and women from the East and the West flocked together, and the world came to Rome.⁶² The popularity of these and all other large spectacles may be judged from the fact that Augustus stationed guards in various parts of the city to prevent it from falling a prey to brigands because so few people remained at home.⁶³ Undoubtedly, therefore, women of noble birth were in attendance in large numbers. On the occasion of the elaborate *naumachia* given on Lake Fucinus by Claudius in A.D. 52, we are told that Agrippina appeared at the side of the Emperor, resplendent in a beautiful chlamys woven with threads of gold.⁶⁴ Women were becoming more gorgeous in their dress in an effort, apparently, to match the sumptuousness of the spectacles.⁶⁵

So far as athletic contests, *agones*, were concerned, they did not become really popular at Rome until Nero's reign, although they were prevalent before his time, and apparently were patronized by women. At the games celebrating the appointment of

⁵⁹ Cic. *Mur.* 35.73.

⁶⁰ Suet. *Aug.* 44.2.

⁶¹ Suet. *Aug.* 43.1; Vell. Pat. 2.100.2.

⁶² Ovid, *Ars* 1.173-4.

⁶³ Suet. *Aug.* 43.1; see also Ovid, *Tristia* 2.501-2.

⁶⁴ Pliny, *H. N.* 33.3.63; cf. Chap. III, note 85.

⁶⁵ For fashionably dressed women, see Juv. 11.201-2. Cf. Ovid, *Ars* 1.93-100; Tertullian, *Spect.* 25, *De cultu fem.* 2.11; Clem. Alex. *Paedag.* 3.2.76 (p. 298 Pott): ἀναμιξ ἄνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν συνιόντων ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλλήλων θέαν.

Augustus as Pontifex Maximus a boxing match was called for. Augustus so strongly objected to the presence of women at these spectacles that he postponed the match until early the following day, making it known that he did not desire women to come to the theatre before the fifth hour.⁶⁶ Nero, on the other hand, actually invited the Vestal Virgins to the gymnastic contests which he held in the Saepta⁶⁷ in connection with the *Neronia*. His reason for this was that at Olympia the same privilege was accorded to the priestesses of Ceres.⁶⁸

We have evidence, too, that distinguished women were present at other public spectacles such as triumphs and quasi triumphs. Their actual participation in the celebration of triumphs will be discussed later. As for quasi triumphs, we have the statement recorded in Suetonius⁶⁹ that when Germanicus returned after quelling the outbreak in Germany, the whole populace, regardless of age, sex, or rank poured out of Rome as far as the twentieth milestone. Similarly, when Nero returned to Rome after the murder of his mother in Campania, grandstands were erected as for a triumph, and he found *festo cultu senatum, conjugum ac liberorum agmina per sexum et aetatem disposita*.⁷⁰

We have observed that the women of high position in the Early Empire entered quite actively into the public social life of their day, showing their interest by attendance at the great spectacles, including the Circus games, the gladiatorial combats, the naval fights, the athletic contests, and the celebration of triumphs and quasi triumphs.

So far as the actual participation of women of the upper classes in these public spectacles was concerned, we find no mention of them in this connection until Nero's time. Before his reign men of rank had been exhibited as charioteers, and runners, and slayers of wild animals, by Julius Caesar,⁷¹ by Augustus,⁷² and by Caligula.⁷³ Nero himself, however, was the first emperor to

⁶⁶ Suet. *Aug.* 44.3.

⁶⁷ Suet. *Nero* 12.3, 21.1.

⁶⁸ Suet. *Nero* 12.4.

⁶⁹ Suet. *Cal.* 4.

⁷⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 14.13.2.

⁷¹ Suet. *Jul.* 39.2.

⁷² Suet. *Aug.* 43.2; see also Dio 51.22.4.

⁷³ Suet. *Cal.* 18.3.

compel not only knights and senators,⁷⁴ but also women of the equestrian and even those of the senatorial order to appear as performers in the Circus, and in the hunting theatre. They drove horses, killed wild beasts, and fought as gladiators, some willingly and others entirely against their will.⁷⁵ Dio, in the passage quoted, characterizes this exhibition of women as *αἰσχιστον καὶ δεινότατον*. These games occurred in A.D. 59 at a festival which Nero held in honor of his mother.⁷⁶ Apparently the Emperor, who was himself by this time driving a chariot in the Circus Vaticanus,⁷⁷ thought that his own disgrace would be lessened if he should sully the reputation of others.⁷⁸ Four years later, when Nero held a gladiatorial exhibition on the same magnificent scale as before, a still greater number of illustrious women and senators disgraced themselves, as Tacitus puts it,⁷⁹ by appearing in the arena.

The willingness of women to be seen in public spectacles is also apparent from the fact that one of the empresses actually appeared in a triumphal procession. When Claudius celebrated his victory over Britain in A.D. 44, his wife Messalina, Suetonius tells us,⁸⁰ followed his chariot in a *carpentum*. Behind her rode those who had won triumphal regalia in the same war. This was, indeed, a rare distinction for a woman.

Women's interest in public spectacles further manifested itself in their sponsorship of shows. When Herod of Judaea instituted quinquennial games in honor of Augustus, the Emperor and Livia together furnished the entire cost, which amounted to five hundred talents.⁸¹ The horse race, which Nero promised in the

⁷⁴ Suet. *Nero* 12.1.

⁷⁵ Dio 61.17.3; cf. Mart. *Spect.* 6 and 6B. See Joann. Antioch., exc. *Virt.* 90 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.* 4.574). For the willing recourse of men *ex nobilissimis domibus* to the arena, see Sen. *Epist.* 99.13, 87.9; Hor. *Epist.* 1.18.36; Prop. 4.8.25-6.

⁷⁶ Dio 61.17.2.

⁷⁷ Sometimes called *Circus Gai et Neronis*. Cf. Suet. *Cal.* 54.1, *Cl.* 21.2, *Nero* 22.2; Dio 59.14.6; Pliny *H. N.* 36.74.

⁷⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 14.14.3-5.

⁷⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 15.32.3. As to the scandal of appearances by women, see Mayor on Juv. 1.22-3; also Juv. 2.53, 6.246-67. For the abolition of the practice by Severus in A.D. 200, see Dio 75.16.1.

⁸⁰ See Chap. V, note 96.

⁸¹ Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 16.5.1.

senate in case of the recovery of Claudius from illness, found, as we have seen,⁸² its strongest advocate and sponsor in Agrippina, who was determined in this way to create popular feeling in favor of her son.

From the evidence gained from our authors we conclude that not only were ladies of noble birth present at the *Ludi Circenses*, but that they actually appeared as performers in them, and were sometimes their sponsors.

Ludi Scaenici

Under the Early Empire the *Ludi Scaenici*⁸³ included *Atellanae*,⁸⁴ *mimi*,⁸⁵ *pantomimi*,⁸⁶ *tragoediae*,⁸⁷ and *comoediae*.⁸⁸ Of these the pantomimes were the most popular, particularly with the upper classes. So deep-seated was the passion for these plays that Seneca called it a *morbus*,⁸⁹ and Tacitus spoke of it as one of the congenital evils of birth in Rome.⁹⁰

At the theatre men and women did not sit together as they did in the Circus.⁹¹ The women were assigned places in the upper part of the cavea, according to the *Lex Julia Theatralis*,⁹²

⁸² See Chap. III, note 107.

⁸³ For a detailed description of the types of stage plays which were popular under the Empire, see Friedländer, *Roman Life and Manners under the Early Empire*, 27.90-117.

⁸⁴ See Tac. *Ann.* 4.14.4, *Oscum quondam ludicrum*, which had been taken up by the *pantomimi*. See Livy 7.2.12.

⁸⁵ For the indecent character of these performances, see Ovid, *Trist.* 2.497-508; 3.86.1-4.

⁸⁶ The pantomimic art, although traceable in some form to the *Atellanae*, received such an impetus from Bathyllus and Pylades that Zosimus 1.6 (*Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, vol. 19) describes them as its inventors: ἡ γὰρ παντομίμος ὀρχησις ἐν ἐκείνοις εἰσέχθη τοῖς χρόνοις, οὕτω πρότερον οὐσα, Πυλάδου καὶ Βαθύλλου πρῶτων αὐτὴν μετέλθοντων. Strabo (5.3.6.233) refers to the survival of the Oscan dialect in the popular mimes. See also Macr. *Sat.* 2.7; Lucian, *de Salt.* 67.

⁸⁷ Suet. *Nero* 21.3; Dio 61.17.3.

⁸⁸ Suet. *Nero* 11.2; Dio 61.17.3.

⁸⁹ Sen. *Contr.* 3.

⁹⁰ Tac. *Dial.* 39. Juvenal (6.87) expresses surprise that the wife of a senator should give up the Circus and the Pantomime Paris, in order to elope with a gladiator.

⁹¹ See note 41 of this chapter.

⁹² Suet. *Aug.* 40. See Ovid, *Am.* 2.7.3; Prop. 4.8.77: colla cave inflectas ad summum obliqua theatrum. In Sulla's day the audience was mixed (Plut. *Sulla* 35-6): οὕτω δὲ τῶν τόπων διακεκριμένων, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τοῦ θεάτρου συμμιγνοὺς ἀνδράσι καὶ γυναῖξιν ὄντος, συνήν μίμους γυναῖξί καὶ καθαρισταῖς.

which was passed during the reign of Augustus. The Vestal Virgins, however, had seats reserved for them over the entrance to the orchestra on the left.⁹³ With them the Empress Livia was permitted to sit by decree of the senate.⁹⁴ We have reason to believe that Antonia, Messalina, and Agrippina II enjoyed this same privilege,⁹⁵ as well as the sisters of Caligula.⁹⁶

The fact that women of the upper classes in general were in attendance at theatrical performances is shown by the following specific instances in our authors. In A.D. 20, according to the account of Tacitus,⁹⁷ a woman by the name of Aemilia Lepida,⁹⁸ accompanied by a number of ladies of high birth, entered the theatre of Pompey during the interruption of her trial by the public games,⁹⁹ and stirred up sympathy in her own behalf. In this same author we read that in A.D. 47 Claudius issued stern edicts, rebuking the people for their wanton conduct in the theatre, where they had insulted Publius Pomponius, a man of consular rank, as well as some ladies of distinction.¹⁰⁰ In Suetonius, mention is made of a woman appearing in the audience at one of the recitals of Nero, dressed in the purple which the Emperor had forbidden.¹⁰¹ Obviously she belonged to the upper class of society.

✓ We are further convinced of the fact that noble women attended the plays by the passages which show their susceptibility to actors' charms. In the reign of Augustus, a woman, *matrona*,¹⁰² with hair cut short in boyish fashion, attended the actor Ste-

⁹³ Vitruv. 5.6; Suet. *Aug.* 44.3; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 19.13.

⁹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 4.16.6.

⁹⁵ See notes 48-50 of this chapter.

⁹⁶ Dio 59.3.4.

⁹⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 3.23.1.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 3.22.1-6.

⁹⁹ Probably the *Ludi Magni Romani*, the first four days of which were scenic. See Marquardt, *Römische Staatsv.* 3².498-9.

¹⁰⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 11.13.1. Mimicry of great personages was not infrequent. The inscription on the gravestone of the mime Vitalis reads, "Anyone I represented shivered, as though at his double; and many women whom I imitated on the stage blushed and were overcome with confusion." Meyer, *Anthol. Lat.* 2, p. 89, 1173. 17-18.

¹⁰¹ Suet. *Nero* 32.3.

¹⁰² See note 52 of this chapter.

phanio.¹⁰³ The severe punishment meted out to the latter by Augustus is evidence enough that the woman in question was a person of importance. Tiberius felt the situation so keenly that he banished pantomimes from Italy, not only because of the factions they caused, but because of their relations with women.¹⁰⁴ Undoubtedly they were women of high station. Otherwise no such ordinance would have been passed.) One of the first acts of Caligula was to bring back the actors.¹⁰⁵ Upon Mnester, the famous pantomime, he bestowed special marks of affection.¹⁰⁶ The popularity of this player continued in the reign of Claudius. Messalina's infatuation for him is a well-known fact,¹⁰⁷ and, as we have already seen,¹⁰⁸ it was because of an intrigue with Mnester that the famous beauty, Poppaea Sabina, fell a victim to Messalina's jealousy.

The interest in plays and in players gradually led to the actual appearance on the stage of not only men but also women of high birth. The Roman prejudice against such appearance was deeply rooted. During the two hundred years after the triumph of Lucius Mummius, Tacitus says,¹⁰⁹ no Roman of good birth had ever degraded himself by playing on the stage. All actors were by law stigmatised by *infamia*.¹¹⁰ A Roman senator or knight declassed himself by appearing as an actor.¹¹¹ The feeling against such an appearance by a highborn woman would naturally be even stronger.¹¹²

¹⁰³ Suet. *Aug.* 45.4. Augustus had Stephanio whipped with rods in three theatres, and then banished him. See Pliny *H. N.* 7.159: Stephanionem qui primum togatus saltare instituit.

¹⁰⁴ Dio 57.21.3; Tac. *Ann.* 4.14.4; Suet. *Tib.* 37.2.

¹⁰⁵ Dio 59.2.5.

¹⁰⁶ Suet. *Cal.* 55.

¹⁰⁷ Dio 60.22.3-5; Tac. *Ann.* 11.28.1, 36.1-2.

¹⁰⁸ See Chap. III, note 59.

¹⁰⁹ Tacitus in this passage is writing of events occurring in A.D. 60, just 205 years after the triumph of L. Mummius over Corinth (Tac. *Ann.* 14.21.2).

¹¹⁰ Edict. praet. *Dig.* 3.2.1: Infamia notatur . . . qui artis ludicrae pronunciandive causa in scaenam prodierit. See also Nepos, *praef.* 5; Cic. *De rep.* 4.10; Macr. *Sat.* 2.7.3.

¹¹¹ For a specific instance, see Suet. *Jul.* 39.2. This knight was restored, however, by being presented with 500,000 sesterces and a gold ring. Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 35.2.

¹¹² For the prejudice against woman's skill in singing and dancing, see Sall. *Catil.* 25: Sempronia psallere et saltare elegantius quam necesse est probae.

Under the Early Empire we find a gradual breaking down of this prejudice with regard to both men and women. Nero's grandfather, Domitius Ahenobarbus, while holding the offices of praetor and of consul, brought Roman knights and even matrons¹¹³ on the stage to act in a mime.¹¹⁴ Augustus himself went so far as to exhibit a dancer who was a knight, and also a woman of high station, in order to ensure the success of the festival which Marcellus gave as aedile.¹¹⁵ Moreover, when the dancer Pylades and the praetor Quintus Crispinus each gave a performance introducing knights and women of distinction on the stage, Augustus took no account of it.¹¹⁶ Notwithstanding these two instances, there is evidence that Augustus still entertained the old prejudice, for he forbade not only the sons of senators, but also their grandsons, so far, at least, as these belonged to the equestrian order, to give stage exhibitions.¹¹⁷

The attitude of Tiberius toward actors was by no means sympathetic.¹¹⁸ As Emperor he gave no public shows at all and very seldom was present at those given by others.¹¹⁹ When corrupt men of both the senatorial and the equestrian orders voluntarily submitted to loss of rank, so that they might not be prevented by the decree of the senate from performing on the stage and in the arena, he punished them with exile.¹²⁰ There is no mention of women appearing as actresses during his reign.

Caligula, on the other hand, was the slave of dancers and of others connected with the stage.¹²¹ Almost every day a performance was given.¹²² Sometimes plays were staged at night and the whole city was illuminated.¹²³ At first Caligula was only a

¹¹³ See notes 52 and 104 of this chapter.

¹¹⁴ Suet. *Nero* 4.

¹¹⁵ Dio 53.31.3; cf. *ibid.* 54.2.5.

¹¹⁶ Dio 55.10.11.

¹¹⁷ Dio 54.2.5.

¹¹⁸ Suet. *Tib.* 34.1, 37.2; Tac. *Ann.* 1.77.4, 4.62.3. Mention has already been made of his banishment of the pantomimes.

¹¹⁹ Suet. *Tib.* 47. In his youth, however, he gave public shows, including stage plays, on a grand scale at the expense of his mother and his stepfather (Suet. *Tib.* 7.1).

¹²⁰ Suet. *Tib.* 35.2; cf. Hor. *Epist.* 1.18.36; Prop. 4.8.25.

¹²¹ Dio 59.5.2.

¹²² Dio 59.5.3, 7.2; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 19.1.13.

¹²³ Suet. *Cal.* 18.2.

spectator, but as time went on he himself actually became a performer.¹²⁴ It is evident from a statement of Dio that during his reign knights and distinguished women were accustomed to appear as actors.¹²⁵

Although Caligula's successor Claudius gave several splendid shows,¹²⁶ he heartily disapproved of having men and women of the upper classes participate in them; for, although we read that he forced upon the stage knights and women of similar rank who had been accustomed to such appearances during the reign of Caligula, we are assured that he did this, not because he was greatly pleased with their performance, but because he wished to bring disgrace upon them for their past conduct. It is certain, at least, that none of them appeared again during the reign of Claudius.¹²⁷

Nero, like Caligula, was devoted to the dramatic art. Not only did he himself¹²⁸ frequently perform in public both in Italy¹²⁹ and in Greece,¹³⁰ but on several occasions he forced men and also women of high birth to make their appearance. At the plays which he gave for the *Eternity of the Empire*, which he ordered to be called *Ludi Maximi*, several men and women of both orders took part,¹³¹ while during the festival which he celebrated in honor of his mother in five or six theatres at the same time, men and women of equestrian and of senatorial rank played the flute, danced in pantomimes, acted in tragedies and in comedies, or sang to the lyre.¹³² In the *Juvenalia*,¹³³ according to Suetonius, even old men of consular rank and aged matrons took part.¹³⁴ For these performances, Tacitus says,¹³⁵ all kinds of persons gave in their names and regardless of birth, age, or official

¹²⁴ Dio 59.5.4-5.

¹²⁵ Dio 60.7.1.

¹²⁶ Suet. *Cl.* 21.1-2.

¹²⁷ Dio 60.7.1.

¹²⁸ Suet. *Nero* 10.2, 12.3; Dio 61.20.1-2, 63.6.3; Juv. 8.198-9.

¹²⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 15.33.2, 16.4.5; Suet. *Nero* 20.2, 21 (entire).

¹³⁰ Dio 63.8.2-5, 9.1-6, 10.1; Suet. *Nero* 19.1, 22.3, 23, 24.

¹³¹ Suet. *Nero* 11.2.

¹³² Dio 61.17.2-3.

¹³³ A new kind of festival which Nero celebrated in honor of the first shaving of his beard (Dio 61.19.1).

¹³⁴ Suet. *Nero* 11.1; cf. Dio 61.19.1.

¹³⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 14.15.1-2.

rank, acted in Greek or Latin plays. Even women of high station participated. Dio¹³⁶ says that during this festival members of the noblest families gave exhibitions of some sort, and he cites, as an example, Aelia Catella, a woman outstanding in birth and wealth, who actually danced in a pantomime although she was an octogenarian. Others who could not give individual performances because of age or illness sang in choruses. All devoted themselves to developing to the best of their ability any talent that they possessed. Indeed, matters were carried to such lengths that, according to Dio,¹³⁷ schools were established for training in the dramatic art, and these were attended by all the most notable people, men and women, girls and boys, old women and old men.¹³⁸ The popularity of the pantomime is further attested by Seneca,¹³⁹ who says that in Nero's reign there were many teachers and many pupils of the art of Pylades and Bathyllus. Everywhere in the city, homes had their private theatres, in which men and women danced, and husbands and wives vied with each other to be the professional's partner. We read also, in Pliny,¹⁴⁰ of a certain Ummidia Quadratilla, who owned pantomimes, and who showed a keener interest in them than was proper for a lady of her station.

We conclude, from the material presented, that not only were stage plays patronized by the upper classes of women under the Early Empire, but that they were alluring enough to attract some women to public appearances. The special impetus was furnished, as we have observed, by the Emperors Caligula and Nero. Under the latter there even sprang up training schools of dramatic art.

As we review the evidence of the participation of women of noble birth in the State Feasts and in the Spectacles, we feel justified in assuming considerable activity on their part in the public social life of their day.

¹³⁶ Dio 61.19.1-2.

¹³⁷ *Id.*

¹³⁸ For the resentful attitude of the elder Seneca toward such pursuits, see *Contr.* 1, *prooem.* Manilius, on the other hand (*Carm. frag.* 4.525), expresses high admiration for these accomplishments. See also Ovid, *Am.* 2.4.25-30; Prop. 2.3.17-20; Stat. *Silv.* 3.5.63.

¹³⁹ Sen. *Nat.* 7.32.3; see also *Epist.* 90.19: itaque . . . hinc molles corporis motus docentium mollesque cantus et infractus.

¹⁴⁰ Pliny, *Epist.* 7.2.4; see also *CIL* 10.1946.

VII

WOMEN IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE STATE

PARTICIPATION

In the consideration of our final topic, I shall endeavor to show that the women of the upper classes at Rome under the Early Empire adhered, for the most part, to the traditional religious life of the state, exerting such influence as they possessed along wholly conventional lines, and receiving such recognition as was in keeping with the customary religious practices. Their one departure from tradition was their acceptance of the idea of emperor worship with its concomitant priesthoods and sacrifices.

We do not wonder that distinguished women of this period were in the main little affected by the cults of the large number of foreigners¹ who thronged the capital. The generally unfavorable attitude of the Early Emperors themselves toward foreign rites, particularly those of the Hebrews and of the Egyptians, would in large measure account for this. Augustus seems to have been the most tolerant. He renewed to the Jews all the privileges which they had enjoyed under the Ptolemies.² Upon the establishment of Judaea as a Roman province in A.D. 6, he and Livia adorned the temple at Jerusalem, and by his order a bull and two lambs were daily sacrificed there to the Supreme God.³ So far as Egyptian rites were concerned, he did not admit them inside the pomerium, but he made provision for the temples; he ordered those which had been built by private persons to be repaired by their sons and descendants, if any survived, and the rest he restored himself.⁴ Agrippa, however, later checked the

¹ For an estimate of the foreign population in the days of Augustus, see T. Frank, *Aspects of Social Behavior in Ancient Rome*, p. 41. Dr. Frank maintains that most of the worshippers of Eastern cults were immigrants, and that these foreigners made only occasional converts among their new friends at Rome; *op. cit.*, p. 53.

² Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 14.7.2, 19.5.2; Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 153, 155-8.

³ Jos. *Bell.* 5.13.6; Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 157, 317.

⁴ Dio 53.2.4; *cf.*, however, Suet. *Aug.* 93.

Egyptian rites, forbidding anyone to perform them even in the suburbs within half a mile of the city.⁵

Tiberius, according to Suetonius,⁶ suppressed foreign cults, especially Egyptian and Jewish rites. Caligula showed so little regard for the sanctity of the Jewish Holy of Holies at Jerusalem that he ordered his own statue to be set up there. Only his death prevented this scandal.⁷ On the other hand, the temple to Isis in the Campus Martius is thought to have been built by him.⁸ Claudius, fearing the growing number of the Jews, forbade them to hold meetings,⁹ or expelled them from Rome.¹⁰ Nero utterly despised all cults¹¹ with the exception of that of the Syrian goddess.¹² His attitude toward the Christians is well known.¹³

In addition to the influence exerted by the indifferent or unfavorable attitude of the Early Emperors toward foreign cults, the religious policy of Augustus was a definite factor in producing in the minds of all Romans, particularly in those of the upper classes, the importance of a close adherence to the old Roman religious beliefs and practices.¹⁴ His zeal in reviving the ancient religious institutions was manifested (1) by the large number of temples which he built or restored,¹⁵ (2) by the celebration of the *Ludi Saeculares* in 17 B.C.,¹⁶ (3) by the reorganization of the Arval

⁵ Dio 54.6.6.

⁶ Suet. *Tib.* 36. See also Tac. *Ann.* 2.85.5; Dio 57.18.5*; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.3.4. For the general attitude of Tiberius toward religious matters, see Suet. *Tib.* 69: circa deos ac religiones neglegentior.

⁷ Tac. *Hist.* 5.9.4. Cf. Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.8.7; see also Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 188, 197-338.

⁸ An ingenious inference of Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus*,² pp. 353-4. See Lucan 8.831-3.

⁹ Dio 60.6.6.

¹⁰ Suet. *Cl.* 25.4; *Acta Apost.* 18.2; cf., however, Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 19.5.2-3.

¹¹ Suet. *Nero* 56: religionum usque quaque contemptor.

¹² Atargatis, a goddess of generation and fecundity, worshipped in Syrian Hierapolis.

¹³ Tac. *Ann.* 15.44.3-8; Suet. *Nero* 16.2.

¹⁴ Augustus, H. F. Pelham thinks (*Essays*, pp. 101-2), was not animated by religious enthusiasm; his motive for reviving the old cults was to restore public confidence, and to awaken faith in a renewal of divine favor. Cf. Ovid, *Ars* 1. 635: expedit esse deos et, ut expedit, esse putemus; see also Plut. *Amator.* 13.2.3; Hor. *Carm.* 3.14.5-9.

¹⁵ For an impressive list, see Platner and Ashby, p. 594. See also *Mon. Ancy.* 4.19.20-21; Suet. *Aug.* 29.1, 30.2, 91.2; Dio 55.10.2-6; Vell. Pat. 2.100.2.

¹⁶ See note 54 of this chapter.

Brotherhood in 11 B.C.,¹⁷ (4) by the nomination of a priest of Jupiter (11 B.C.) for the first time since Sulla,¹⁸ (5) by the increase in the number and importance of the priests, and also in their allowances and privileges, particularly those of the Vestal Virgins,¹⁹ and (6) by the revival of some of the ancient rites,²⁰ such as the ceremonies of the *Lupercalia* and the festival of the *Compitalia*. Along with these old beliefs, Augustus, as we know, advanced the idea of the Empire and of his own supremacy.²¹

This brief survey of the religious policies of Augustus seems to be necessary to an understanding of the part that highborn women played in the religious life of the Early Empire, for it was with the religious ideas encouraged by Augustus that these women were chiefly concerned, namely, with the traditional Roman beliefs, and with the supremacy of the imperial family. To be sure, we read, in our sources, that Messalina indulged in a Bacchic orgy,²² but in her hour of danger, she resorted not to Bacchus, but to the long-established prestige of the Vestal Virgins to crave a pardon for herself from her husband Claudius, the Pontifex Maximus.²³ We know that some noble women became infatuated with the worship of Isis.²⁴ So far as Christianity²⁵ was concerned, we read in Tacitus of a lady of distinction, Pomponia Graecina, who was accused of some foreign super-

¹⁷ His object in doing this seems to have been to glorify the imperial family. See Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Ency., *Arvales Fratres*, pp. 1468, 1471-2, 1483.

¹⁸ Dio 54.36.1; Suet. *Aug.* 31.4.

¹⁹ Suet. *Aug.* 31.3.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 31.4.

²¹ Even before his death, Augustus was worshipped as a god in the Eastern provinces, and in several places even in Italy (G. Rushforth, *Latin Historical Inscriptions*, pp. 44-58). After his death, the voting of a temple, with religious worship in his honor, established his divinity at Rome (Tac. *Ann.* 1.10.8).

²² Tac. *Ann.* 11.31.4-5.

²³ *Ibid.* 11.32.5.

²⁴ For a specific instance, see the account of Paulina in Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.3.4: *θεραπεύει τῆς Ἰσιδος σφόδρα ἐπηγγυμένη*. For Isiac worship at Rome, see Marquardt, *Römische Staatsv.* 32.77-82.

²⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 15.44.4; cf. Suet. *Nero* 16.2. That the number of noble women converted to Christianity in the first century must have been small is attested by the Christian writers themselves, who state that even up to the middle of the third century, the new faith counted only few adherents among the higher classes. Euseb. *H. E.* 5.21; Orig. *Contr. Cels.* 3.9.

stition.²⁶ The discovery of the name Pomponius on Christian inscriptions of a later date has led to the supposition that Pomponia was a Christian.²⁷ Among the proselytes of the Jews might be mentioned a noble lady by the name of Fulvia, whose Jewish teachers had incited her to send a contribution to the temple of Jerusalem.²⁸ Josephus considered the Empress Poppaea a zealous advocate of Judaism.²⁹

Mention should be made also of the influence exerted by the Chaldean astrologers, especially upon persons of rank, including the members of the imperial family.³⁰ Among the women, we have record of a specific instance in the case of Agrippina II, who consulted the Chaldeans about Nero, and received the well-known reply that her son would become emperor and slay his mother.³¹ Poppaea, too, according to Tacitus, had secret consultations with astrologers when she aspired to become Empress of Rome.³² That the influence of astrologers was deprecated by the emperors is apparent from the legislation which was passed against them under Augustus,³³ Tiberius,³⁴ and Claudius.³⁵ Such legal cases as those of Lepida, Lollia, Vibia, and Servilia,³⁶ who were all women of noble birth, charged with making in-

²⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 13.32.3. Pomponia was the wife of the consul Plautius, conqueror of Britain.

²⁷ De Rossi, in *Roma sotterranea* (German edition by F. X. Kraus, pp. 44, 127) is of the opinion that Lucina, on whose land the crypt of Lucina was originally built, was no other than Pomponia Graecina, who had assumed this agnomen among her Christian friends. See also H. D. Spence-Jones, *The Early Christians in Rome*, p. 245. Friedländer (*Roman Life and Manners*, 17, 257-8) thinks it much more probable that Pomponia became attached to the Jewish faith.

²⁸ Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 18.3.5. They themselves embezzled the contribution.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 20.8.11, 11.1. *Vit.* 3.

³⁰ For the influence upon Augustus, see Suet. *Aug.* 94.12, 98.4; upon Tiberius, who was *addictus mathematicae* (Suet. *Tib.* 69), see Dio 55.11.1, 57.15.7, 57.19.3-4; Tac. *Ann.* 6.20.3; Suet. *Tib.* 14.4; upon Caligula, see Suet. *Cal.* 57.2; upon Nero, see Suet. *Nero* 36.1; Tac. *Ann.* 15.47.1.

³¹ Tac. *Ann.* 14.9.5; Dio 61.2.2. See also Joann. Antioch., exc. Salmas. 92 (in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Graec.* 4.576): ἦν δὲ καὶ λόγιον Ἐρχάτος Αἰνεαδῶν μητροκτόνος ἡγεμονεύσας.

³² Tac. *Hist.* 1.22; cf. Juv. 6.553-91.

³³ Dio 56.25.5.

³⁴ Dio 57.15.8; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 2.32.5.

³⁵ Dio 60.33.3^b: see also Tac. *Ann.* 12.52.4. Cf. Tac. *Hist.* 1.22: quod genus hominum et vetabitur semper et retinebitur.

³⁶ For these cases, see Tac. *Ann.* 3.22.2, 12.22.1, 12.52.1, 16.30.2-3; cf. Dio 62.26.3.

quiries from the Chaldeans, furnish further evidence of the prevalence of the custom of consulting astrologers.

Important as these extraneous influences must have been in the period of the Early Empire, we find, nevertheless, that the majority of our references picture the women of distinction as participating in the conventional religious life of their day.³⁷ The services of Vesta were still performed by the daughters of the noblest families. That it was becoming increasingly difficult, however, to recruit priestesses from this class of society, is evident from the fact that in A.D. 5 a law was enacted permitting daughters of freedmen to serve in this capacity. Although many vied for the honor, no priestess was appointed from this class.³⁸ Augustus did all that he could to encourage this worship. On one occasion when a priestess was to be appointed, and many men were striving to keep their daughters from being subjected to the decision by lot, Augustus swore that if any one of his grand-daughters were of suitable age, he would have offered her.³⁹ Tiberius continued the policy of his predecessor. He consoled a rejected candidate for the sacred office by giving her a dowry of a million sesterces.⁴⁰ To the Vestal Cornelia, who had been chosen to take the place of Scantia, the senate, with his sanction, voted a sum of two million sesterces, in order to enhance the dignity of priestly offices and to encourage persons to undertake such duties more readily.⁴¹ In addition to the usual religious duties which devolved upon the Vestals⁴² there were extraordinary services which they were required to perform. When Augustus returned from the East in 19 B.C., and the altar to Fortuna Redux was consecrated, the senate ordered the priestesses, together with the pontiffs, to perform a yearly sacrifice on the anniversary of his return.⁴³ Similarly when the

³⁷ The influence of the Stoic philosophy upon distinguished women (Tac. *Ann.* 16.34.1) would be no deterrent to belief in the traditional religion of Rome. Even Livia found consolation in the words of the Stoic Areus (Sen. *ad Marc.* 4, 2).

³⁸ Dio 55.22.5; cf. Gell. 1.12.12.

³⁹ Suet. *Aug.* 31.3.

⁴⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 2.86.1-2.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 4.16.6.

⁴² See Marquardt, *Römische Staatsv.* 3².342-7.

⁴³ *Mon Ancyr.* 2.11; see also Dio 54.10.3.

senate decreed an altar to the Peace of Augustus upon his victorious return from Gaul in 13 B.C., it was stated that the chief magistrates, the priests, and the Vestal Virgins should celebrate anniversary sacrifices.⁴⁴ After the deification of Livia, her worship was committed to their care.⁴⁵

In addition to the worship of Vesta there still existed among the women a regard for the other traditional gods and goddesses of Rome. Atia, mother of Augustus, together with other matrons, attended the solemn service of Apollo in his temple by night.⁴⁶ When disquieting reports of the illness of Germanicus were followed by the rumor of his recovery, all the inhabitants, we are told,⁴⁷ in spite of the lateness of the hour, flocked to the Capitol with lights and sacrificial victims. When vows were to be taken in Nero's reign a great throng of all classes, *magna ordinum frequentia*, assembled at the Capitol.⁴⁸ In this same reign, after the great fire, it was the ancient gods who were propitiated.⁴⁹ The Sibylline Books⁵⁰ were consulted and prayers were offered to Vulcan, to Ceres, and to Proserpina. The matrons participated in this act of propitiation, and supplicated Juno in the Capitol first, and afterwards at the nearest point upon the sea,⁵¹ from which water was drawn to sprinkle the temple and the image of the goddess; *sellisternia*⁵² and *pervigilia* were celebrated by the married women.⁵³

⁴⁴ *Mon. Ancy.* 2.12.

⁴⁵ Dio 60.5.2.

⁴⁶ Suet. *Aug.* 94.4.

⁴⁷ Suet. *Cal.* 6.1.

⁴⁸ Suet. *Nero* 46.2.

⁴⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 15.44.1.

⁵⁰ Augustus had made a choice among the Sibylline Books, and had deposited them in two gilded cases under the pedestal of the Palatine Apollo (Suet. *Aug.* 31.1). For the attitude of Tiberius toward these books, see Dio 57.18.5; Tac. *Ann.* 1.76.1-2, 6.12.1-4. For a full description of this collection of prophecies, see Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Ency.*, *Sibyllinische Orakel*, pp. 2103-69.

⁵¹ *I.e.*, Ostia.

⁵² See Val. Max. 2.1.2, for the preservation of the custom of having the goddesses seated, whereas women under the Empire reclined at meals: Juno et Minerva in sellas ad cenam invitabantur, quod genus severitatis aetas nostra diligentius in Capitolio quam in suis domibus conservat.

⁵³ Tac. *Ann.* 15.44.1. Such all-night festivals, *παιγνυλίδες*, were an ancient Greek custom. They were apparently a late introduction at Rome, though frequently mentioned during the period of the Empire. See Pliny, *H. N.* 18.12.32.124; Suet. *Cal.* 54.2, *Vit.* 10.3.

The religious event, however, which, more than any other in the Early Empire, called for the public participation of women was the celebration of the *Ludi Saeculares*,⁵⁴ given by Augustus in 17 B.C. At these sacred games, which lasted for three days and three nights,⁵⁵ one hundred and ten chosen matrons, one for each year of the Etruscan *saeculum*, gave *sellisternia* to Juno and Diana, and offered supplications and sang hymns to the former goddess on the Capitol.⁵⁶ On the third day, after Augustus and Agrippa had offered a bloodless sacrifice to Apollo and Diana on the Palatine, a chorus of twenty-seven boys and the same number of girls,⁵⁷ sang the *Carmen Saeculare*. Special permission to attend this festival was granted to unmarried men and women who had been forbidden to view the public games by the law relating to marriage.⁵⁸

Not only did women take part in the worship of the traditional gods of Rome, as we have seen, but they also participated in the conventional state functions of a religious nature. According to an account given by Dio, they took part in state funerals. On the occasion of the death of Augustus, he tells us,⁵⁹ there were present in the procession the senate, and the equestrian order with their wives. After the ceremonies all the other people departed, but Livia remained on the spot for five days in company with the most prominent knights, and then gathered up the bones of Augustus, and placed them in his tomb.⁶⁰ The women were required by a decree to observe mourning for him for a whole year.⁶¹

So far as emperor worship⁶² was concerned, the imperial ladies were very closely identified with it by their appointment as

⁵⁴ For a detailed description of these games, see Zosimus 2.5. See also Chap. VI, note 54 (Suet. *Aug.* 31.4).

⁵⁵ Hor. *Carm. Saec.* 23-24; Val. Max. 2.4.5.

⁵⁶ Cf. Ovid, *Tristia* 2.23-6.

⁵⁷ Hor. *Carm. Saec.* 6; Zosimus 2.5.

⁵⁸ *CIL* 6.4. part 2, 32323, line 57: . . . SPECTARE LICEAT IEIS QUI LEGE DE MARTANDIS ORDINIBUS TENENTUR; cf. Dio 54.30.5.

⁵⁹ Dio 56.42.1.

⁶⁰ Dio 56.42.4.

⁶¹ Dio 56.43.1.

⁶² Of the emperors with whom we are dealing only Augustus and Claudius were deified. Caligula's claims to divine majesty (Suet. *Cal.* 22.2-4; Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 19.1.1) resulted in no official cult at Rome.

priestesses. (When the senate declared Augustus immortal, and assigned to him priests and sacred rites, this same body made Livia his priestess, and also permitted her to use a lictor when she exercised her sacred office.⁶³) Antonia, also, received appointment as priestess of Augustus from her grandson Caligula.⁶⁴ The fact that the latter granted her all the privileges of the Vestal Virgins would seem to indicate that she, too, enjoyed the honor of having a lictor. Caesonia was attached to the service of her husband Caligula, who styled himself *Jupiter Latiaris*.⁶⁵ Agrippina II, after the death of Claudius, was appointed his priestess by the senate, and was assigned two lictors.⁶⁶ This close association of imperial women with the cults of the deified Augustus and Claudius led quite naturally to the idea of their own deification. This matter we shall discuss later.

The participation of women of the upper classes in the religious life of the state during the Early Empire was, then, as we have observed, confined chiefly to the worship of the traditional gods and goddesses, and to the observation of the conventional rites and ceremonies. In addition, the introduction of emperor worship brought with it an opportunity for service as priestesses.

INFLUENCE

The influence of women in the religious life of the state was by no means negligible. The Vestal Virgins at this period were still a potent factor. Wherever there was a desire to add solemnity or dignity to an occasion, or to insure fair dealing, these priestesses were called into service. Because of the sacred character of the Vestals, wills were committed to their charge.⁶⁷ Augustus not only entrusted his will to their keeping, but also three rolls, one of which contained the account of his achievements, still preserved for us in the *Monumentum Ancyranum*. In such

⁶³ Dio 56.46.1-2; cf., however, Tac. *Ann.* 1.14.3.

⁶⁴ Dio 59.3.4.

⁶⁵ Dio 59.28.5; cf. Suet. *Cal.* 22.2.

⁶⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 13.2.6.

⁶⁷ Suet. *Aug.* 101.1; see also Dio 56.32.1^a; Tac. *Ann.* 1.8.1; cf. Suet. *Jul.* 83.1.

keeping they were considered inviolable.⁶⁸ Very solemn treaties, too, were deposited with them, such as that of the triumvirs with Sextus Pompeius.⁶⁹ Reference has been made above⁷⁰ to Messalina's appeal to the Vestal Vibidia for intercession with Claudius. The strength of the worship of Vesta may be judged from the fact that the order of Vestals was not abolished until A.D. 394, in spite of the public recognition of Christianity.⁷¹

The imperial ladies were not without influence in matters of religion. Livia played an important part in enhancing the glory of Augustus. She bestowed a million sesterces upon a certain Numerius Atticus, a senator and ex-praetor, because he swore that he had seen Augustus ascending to heaven, a declaration similar to that made by the senator Proculus concerning Romulus.⁷² After his apotheosis she held a private festival in his honor for three days in the palace.⁷³ In conjunction with Tiberius she built for Augustus, as we have seen,⁷⁴ the shrine which was voted by the senate. Livia, according to Ovid,⁷⁵ was responsible for the restoration of the temple of the Bona Dea on the Aventine Hill, and for the erection of the Aedes Concordiae.⁷⁶ She also dedicated in the temple of the Capitoline Venus a statue of one of the children of Germanicus and Agrippina in the guise of Cupid.⁷⁷ Agrippina II appears to have undertaken the erection of a temple to Claudius on the Caelian Hill. This was almost entirely destroyed by Nero and rebuilt by Vespasian.⁷⁸

The time-honored sanctity of the Vestal Virgins and the efforts of Livia, in particular, to promote the religious policies of

⁶⁸ Plut. *Ant.* 58.5.

⁶⁹ App. *B.C.* 5.73; Dio 48.37.1, 46.2.

⁷⁰ Chap. III, note 66.

⁷¹ Zosimus 5.38.

⁷² Dio 56.46.2.

⁷³ Dio 56.46.5; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.73.4: Cassium solitum interesse ludis quos mater sua in memoriam Augusti sacrasset. This festival is generally identified with the scenic *Ludi Palatini* (Suet. *Cal.* 56.2), which Josephus describes (*Ant. Jud.* 19.1.13) in his account of the assassination of Gaius during them.

⁷⁴ See Chap. II, note 47 (Dio 56.46.3; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 6.45.2), and Chap. VI, note 46.

⁷⁵ Ovid, *Fasti* 5.157-8. No men were allowed to enter its precincts. See Festus 278 M.

⁷⁶ See Chap. II, note 50 (Ovid, *Fasti* 6.637-8).

⁷⁷ Suet. *Cal.* 7. This child died just as he was reaching the age of boyhood.

⁷⁸ Suet. *Vesp.* 9.1.

Augustus,⁷⁹ were undoubtedly important factors in the preservation, at least outwardly, of the traditional religious beliefs of Rome.

RECOGNITION DURING LIFETIME

Many religious honors were accorded the imperial women even while they were still living. Both Livia, wife of Augustus, and Julia, his daughter, were called divine, although only in the provinces. We have evidence, in Livia's case, in a coin found in the town of Saint Mark in Sicily.⁸⁰ Julia was called divine in Paphos,⁸¹ where a statue of her was set up; in Mytilene⁸² she was called New Aphrodite, and in Eresus⁸³ Aphrodite Genetrix. Inscriptions on coins show that Livia was worshipped also as Ceres,⁸⁴ Juno,⁸⁵ and Venus.⁸⁶ In addition, she was honored by being depicted⁸⁷ as *Justitia*, *Salus Augusta*, and *Pietas*.⁸⁸ This identification of imperial women with abstract ideas is further seen on the sesterties struck by Caligula in the first two years of his reign, on which his three sisters were represented as *Securitas*, *Concordia*, and *Fortuna*.⁸⁹

Livia was even honored by a temple, which was voted to her and Tiberius and the senate by the cities of Asia.⁹⁰ A later

⁷⁹ Ovid, *Fasti* 5.157-8: Livia restituit <templum Bonae Deae> ne non imitata maritum/esset et ex omni parte secuta vicem. "Inscriptions prove that during the next two centuries belief in the national deities survived despite rationalism, Caesar-worship, and Oriental cults, and perhaps the survival was partly due to the religious policy of Augustus" (T. Rice Holmes, *The Architecture of the Roman Empire*, vol. 2, p. 52). Cf. G. Boissier, *La Religion Romaine*, 1.301, 321-2.

⁸⁰ Orelli 1.614: LIVIAE AUGUSTI DEAE MUNICIPIUM.

⁸¹ *JHS* 9.243, no. 69, "Excavations in Cyprus 1887-8."

⁸² *CIG* 12 (part 2), 482: Ἰουλιὰ νέα Ἀφροδίτα, τὰ παῖδι τῷ Σεβαστῷ Θέῳ Καλίσσας, τὰ ἐνεργήτῃδι.

⁸³ *Ibid.* 537.

⁸⁴ Orelli 1.618; Eckhel, *Doct. Num.* 6.147.

⁸⁵ Orelli 1.1320; cf. Eckhel, *op. cit.*, 5.294.

⁸⁶ Orelli 1.1328: IUNONI TYCHES IULIAE AUGUSTAE VENER. In Orelli's interpretation IUNONI TYCHES = GENIO TYCHES, and *Vener.* stands for *Veneris*.

⁸⁷ Probably on the *dupondii* of Tiberius; see Balsdon, *The Emperor Gaius*, p. 32, fn. 21.

⁸⁸ Mattingly and Sydenham, 1.106, nos. 22-4.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 1.117, no. 26.

⁹⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 4.15.4, 56.3. That Smyrna was the chosen site is proved by an extant Smyrnaean coin, bearing on the obverse the figure of Tiberius in the centre of a temple, and the inscription Σεβαστὸς Τιβέριος; on the reverse Σεβαστή and Σύνκληρος. See Eckhel, *Doct. Num.* 2.547.

request from an embassy from Spain to set up a temple to her and her son was, however, denied.⁹¹ When the child Augusta⁹² was born, a temple was decreed to Fecundity, and golden images of the two goddesses of Fortune were to be set up on the throne of the Capitoline Jupiter in honor of the child.⁹³ On the occasion of the severe illness of Livia in A.D. 22, the senate vowed an *Ara Pietatis Augustae*,⁹⁴ while the knights of Rome made vows to *Fortuna Equestris* for her recovery.⁹⁵

So far as the annual *vota* were concerned, Tiberius allowed his mother's name to be included with his,⁹⁶ while Caligula granted this same privilege to his three sisters.⁹⁷ To the latter, as well as to Antonia, Caligula also assigned all the privileges of the Vestal Virgins.⁹⁸ These included, as we have seen, the right to use the *carpentum*,⁹⁹ and to be accompanied by a lictor,¹⁰⁰ as well as to have their persons considered inviolable.¹⁰¹

At the time of Livia's illness which has been mentioned above, public supplications¹⁰² were voted to her, along with an exhibition of the *Ludi Magni* to be held by the pontiffs, the augurs, and the three sacred colleges, namely, *Quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, *Septemviri Epulones*, and *Sodales Augustales*. The birth of Augusta was another occasion which called forth a public thanks-

⁹¹ Tac. *Ann.* 4.37.1. For the noble speech made by Tiberius on this occasion, see 4.38.1-3.

⁹² The daughter of Poppaea and Nero.

⁹³ Tac. *Ann.* 15.23.3-4. These honors came to nothing, as the infant died before she was four months old.

⁹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 3.64.1; Dessau 1.202: PIETATI AUGUSTAE EX S. C. . . . TI CLAUDIUS CAESAR AUG. GERMANICUS . . . DEDICAVIT.

⁹⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 3.71.1-2. Tacitus says that, although at Rome there were many temples of Fortuna; there was none with the title *Equestris* (See Platner and Ashby, p. 215). It was discovered, however, Tacitus continues, that there was one with that title at Antium (*cf.* Hor. *Carm.* 1.35.1), and so the offering was set up in that city.

⁹⁶ *CIL* 6.2024.

⁹⁷ Dio 59.3.4, 9.2.

⁹⁸ Dio 59.3.4.

⁹⁹ See Chap. V, notes 92-7.

¹⁰⁰ Dio 47.19.3.

¹⁰¹ Plut. *Num.* 10.6.

¹⁰² Tac. *Ann.* 3.64.3. Tacitus here uses the term *supplicia*, an old sense of the word for *supplicationes*, (Festus). *Cf.* Sall. *Catil.* 9.2; Livy 22.57.5: quibus precibus supplicisque deos possent placare.

giving,¹⁰³ and also a decree for a contest after the model of the great games at Actium.¹⁰⁴ In addition, Circensian Games were to be held at Antium in honor of the Claudian and Domitian families.¹⁰⁵

Our sources show us that the women close to the imperial throne, even while living, enjoyed such unusual distinctions as deification, honorary temples and altars erected to them, vows, and games, as well as the special privileges bestowed upon the Vestal Virgins.

RECOGNITION AFTER DEATH

The burial honors bestowed upon the women of the imperial family were of the highest order. Augustus caused the body of his sister Octavia to lie in state in the shrine of Julius, mourning was publicly observed for her, and senators discarded their official dress. Her body was carried in the procession by her sons-in-law.¹⁰⁶ Public funerals were also accorded Livia,¹⁰⁷ and Drusilla,¹⁰⁸ with burial in the Mausoleum of Augustus. At Drusilla's funeral, the pretorians and the equestrian order ran about the pyre, and boys of noble birth performed the exercise *Troy* about her tomb.¹⁰⁹ Conspicuous honors were paid to Agrippina I by her son Caligula. He himself hurried off to Pandateria to remove her ashes to Rome. He brought them, as well as the remains of his brother Nero, to Ostia in a bireme with a banner placed in the stern. From there he had them carried on two biers by the most distinguished knights up the Tiber to Rome, to the Mausoleum of Augustus. This was done in the middle of the day, when the streets were crowded.¹¹⁰ Poppaea likewise

¹⁰³ See note 93 of this chapter. In this passage (*Ann.* 15.23.3) Tacitus uses the term *supplicationes*; cf. preceding note.

¹⁰⁴ Quinquennial games instituted by Augustus at Nicopolis. See Suet. *Aug.* 18.2; Dio 50.12.3, 51.1.3.

¹⁰⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 15.23.3.

¹⁰⁶ Dio 54.35.4-5; see Suet. *Aug.* 61.2; Sen. *Consol. ad Polyb.* 15.2. Atia, mother of Augustus, had also received the highest honors after her death (Suet. *Aug.* 61.2).

¹⁰⁷ Dio 58.2.1-3.

¹⁰⁸ Dio 59.11.1. For the *funus publicum*, see Marquardt, *Das Privatleben der Römer*², p. 350.

¹⁰⁹ Dio 59.11.2. For Vergil's description of this exercise, see *Aen.* 5.545-603.

¹¹⁰ Suet. *Cal.* 15.1; Dio 59.3.5.

received public burial. Her body was not burned in accordance with the Roman custom, but was filled with spices and embalmed like those of foreign kings, and was laid in the Julian Mausoleum.¹¹¹ Pliny states that more perfumes were consumed on her funeral pile than Arabia produced in a year.¹¹²

To the Vestal Virgins, after their death, the privileges of the ancient royal household were granted and they were considered an exception to the law of the Twelve Tables which forbade burial within the city.¹¹³

Women were also honored by funeral orations. When Augustus was in his twelfth year, he delivered a funeral oration before the people in honor of his grandmother Julia.¹¹⁴ At the time of Octavia's death,¹¹⁵ Augustus delivered the oration at the shrine of Julius, and Drusus delivered one from the rostra.¹¹⁶ Livia's eulogy was pronounced by Caligula, although he was not yet of age;¹¹⁷ Drusilla was eulogized by her husband,¹¹⁸ and Poppaea by Nero.¹¹⁹

As we have seen above, public mourning was observed for Octavia. For Livia the senate ordered mourning for a whole year on the part of the women.¹²⁰ When Drusilla died, Caligula appointed a period of public grief, during which it was a capital crime to laugh, bathe, or dine with one's parents, wife, or children.¹²¹

¹¹¹ Tac. *Ann.* 16.6.2-3. *Tumulus Juliorum* was another name for the mausoleum of Augustus; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 3.4.1, 9.2. For Poppaea's leanings toward Judaism, see note 29 of this chapter. Friedländer (*Roman Life and Manners*,⁷ 1.257) attributes the fact that she was embalmed to her Jewish predilections.

¹¹² H. N. 12.18.41.83.

¹¹³ Serv. *ad Aen.* 11.206: . . . unde imperatores et virgines Vestae quia legibus non tenentur, in civitate habent sepulchra. See Marquardt, *Römische Staatsv.* 32.309. See also Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Excavations*, p. 142.

¹¹⁴ Suet. *Aug.* 8.1; cf. *ibid.*, Jul. 6.1. The *laudatio* of distinguished women, practically unknown before the time of Julius Caesar, became prevalent under the Empire. See Marquardt, *Das Privatleben der Römer*², pp. 359-60.

¹¹⁵ Suet. *Aug.* 61.2.

¹¹⁶ Dio 54.35.5. This was Nero Claudius Drusus, brother of Tiberius.

¹¹⁷ Suet. *Cal.* 10.1.

¹¹⁸ Dio 59.11.1. For the subsequent plot of her husband, M. Aemilius Lepidus, against Caligula, see Chap. III, notes 11-12.

¹¹⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 16.6.3.

¹²⁰ Dio 58.2.2.

¹²¹ Suet. *Cal.* 24.2; cf. Dio 59.11.5. For Caligula's own restless behavior at this time, see Chap. III, note 8.

After their death, several of the Early Empresses were apotheosized. Although Livia, as we have seen, was recognized as a goddess in the provinces during her lifetime,¹²² she was not deified at Rome until the reign of Claudius.¹²³ Tiberius had prohibited any attribution of divine honors to her.¹²⁴ We infer the deification of Antonia from the mention of a temple erected to her, probably by Claudius.¹²⁵ Drusilla was deemed worthy of divine honors in all the cities,¹²⁶ receiving the name of *Panthea*. Indeed, a certain Livius Geminus,¹²⁷ a senator, invoking destruction upon himself and his children, if he spoke falsely, swore that he had seen her ascending to heaven and associating with the gods; and he called all the other gods and Panthea herself to witness.¹²⁸ Divine honors were also voted to Poppaea¹²⁹ and to her daughter Augusta.¹³⁰ One senator, Capito Cossutianus,¹³¹ went so far as to declare that to disbelieve in the divinity of Poppaea came from the same spirit as to refuse to swear to the acts of the Divine Augustus and the Divine Julius.¹³²

The names of some of the imperial women were used in taking

¹²² See note 80 of this chapter.

¹²³ Suet. *Cl.* 11.2; Dio 60.5.2; Vell. Pat. 2.130.5. See Ovid, *Fasti* 1.535-6; Carmentis in her prophecy says: Utque ego perpetuis olim sacrorum in aris/Sic Augusta novum Iulia numen erit. Cf. Prud. *Symmach.* 1.251: Adiecere sacrum, fieret quo Livia Juno; see also *CIL* 6.2032: OB CONSECRATIONEM DIVAE AUGUSTAE.

¹²⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 5.2.1; cf. Dio 58.2.1.

¹²⁵ Pliny, *H. N.* 35.10.36.94. Although the majority of the manuscripts have the reading *Antoniae templum*, Sillig (vol. 5., p. 241) seems to favor *Annae*, and suggests the possibility that since there was a grove of Anna Perenna near the Tiber, it is credible that a temple of this goddess also existed there, although nothing elsewhere is established concerning it.

¹²⁶ Dio 59.11.3; cf. Suet. *Cal.* 24.2, *numen Drusillae*. See Orelli 674; *Inscr.* Henz. 5389. The official character of Drusilla's consecration is proved by the Arval Record; see *Ephem. Epigraph.* 8.321. For the *consecratio* and the rites associated with it see E. Bickermann, "Die Römische Kaiserapotheose," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, 27.1-34.

¹²⁷ The name should probably be *Geminus*; cf. *Prosopograph. imp. Rom.* 2.290.

¹²⁸ Dio 59.11.4; for this declaration he received a million sesterces.

¹²⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 16.21.2; cf. Dio 63.26.3. See also *CIL* 11.1331: DIVAE POPPAEAE AUGUSTAE IMP. NERONIS CAESARIS AUGUST.

¹³⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 15.23.4; in 16.6.3 she is referred to as *divinae infantis*. Medals are inscribed to her as DIVA CLAUD. NER. F. (Cohen, *op. cit.*, 1.315).

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 11.6.5, 13.33. 3-4, 14.48.2.

¹³² Tac. *Ann.* 16.22.5. This was on the occasion when Capito was preferring charges against Thræsea Paetus, who had purposely absented himself from the senate when divine honors were being voted to Poppaea.

oaths. Claudius ordered Livia's name to be so used,¹³³ and Caligula had the same decree passed regarding Drusilla.¹³⁴ After his sister's death Caligula never took an oath concerning matters of great importance either in the assemblies of the people or before the soldiers without swearing by the divine majesty of Drusilla.¹³⁵

The idea of deification naturally suggested temples, shrines, images, and priests. Livia shared a temple with Augustus on the Palatine,¹³⁶ where an image of her was set up by Claudius.¹³⁷ The Vestal Virgins were charged with the duty of offering the proper sacrifices.¹³⁸ In this same temple there were also placed statues of Drusilla, Claudia Augusta, and Poppaea Sabina.¹³⁹ A temple, erected to Antonia, has already been mentioned.¹⁴⁰ For Drusilla a shrine was decreed, and twenty priests, women as well as men. It was further voted that a golden effigy of her should be set up in the senate house, and that in a temple of Venus in the forum a statue of her should be dedicated of the same size as that of the goddess, and honored by the same rites.¹⁴¹ To Poppaea, Nero dedicated a beautifully adorned shrine with an inscription that the women had built it to the deified Sabina, Venus.¹⁴² To the child Claudia Augusta a couch at the sellisternia, a temple, and priest were voted by the obsequious senate.¹⁴³

We have record of several instances in which commemorative games were held to reverence the memory of the imperial ladies.

¹³³ Dio 60.5.2.

¹³⁴ Dio 59. 11.3.

¹³⁵ Suet. *Cal.* 24.2.

¹³⁶ Orelli 2446; *CIL* 6.4222: *TEMPLI DIVI AUGUSTI ET DIVAE AUGUSTAE*. See note 74 of this chapter.

¹³⁷ Dio 60.5.2.

¹³⁸ See note 45 of this chapter.

¹³⁹ Jordan (*Topographie der Stadt Rom im Alterthum*, 1, part 3, p. 80) considers the *aedes Caesarum* (Suet. *Galba* 1) another name for the Temple of the Divine Augustus, and believes that it was so called because in the course of time all the deified members of the Julian-Claudian house were worshipped in this temple.

¹⁴⁰ See note 126 of this chapter.

¹⁴¹ Dio 59.11.2-3.

¹⁴² Dio 63.26.3-4. The building had been constructed with money of which a great part had been stolen from the women. Platner and Ashby list an Ἀφροδίτειον, apparently a shrine of Venus, on the Palatine, under the date of A.D. 193. They make no mention of the shrine referred to by Dio in the passage quoted.

¹⁴³ Tac. *Ann.* 15.23.4.

Agrippina I¹⁴⁴ and Antonia¹⁴⁵ were honored by Caligula and Claudius respectively, with Circensian games and a *carpentum* to carry their images in the procession. Livia received similar recognition from Claudius, being honored with equestrian contests,¹⁴⁶ and a chariot drawn by elephants in the circus procession like that of Augustus.¹⁴⁷ For Drusilla's birthday, games like the *Ludi Martiales* were decreed,¹⁴⁸ and the people connected with the stage also held a festival, furnished a spectacle, and set up and dedicated images of her and of Caligula.

The recognition, then, which was bestowed upon the imperial women after their death, was manifestly as honorable as that which the emperors themselves received, consisting, as we have indicated, of public funerals, entombment in the mausoleum of Julius or of Augustus, funeral orations, public mourning, deification, oaths sworn in their name, temples, shrines, images, and priests, as well as commemorative games.

In general, we may assert that, in the religious life of their day, the women of rank of the Early Empire played a vital part, supporting, as they did, not only the traditional state religion, but emperor worship as well. Their importance was acknowledged by the high honors which were bestowed upon them both during their lifetime and after their death.

¹⁴⁴ Suet. *Cal.* 15.1. A coin in the British Museum represents the *carpentum* of Agrippina I and bears the inscription: S.P.Q.R. MEMORIAE AGRIPPINAE. See Cohen, *op. cit.*, 1.231. For the use of the *carpentum* as a state carriage, see Chap. V, notes 92-7.

¹⁴⁵ Suet. *Cl.* 11.2.

¹⁴⁶ Dio 60.5.2.

¹⁴⁷ Suet. *Cl.* 11.2.

¹⁴⁸ Dio 59.24.7, 11.3, 13.8. The celebration was the same as that appointed for Augustus; see Dio 56.46.4-5.

CONCLUSION

The survey which we have made in the foregoing pages leads us to draw the following conclusions: First, women of rank of the Early Empire, and particularly the members of the imperial household, played the political game with the astuteness of seasoned politicians. Impelled by motives, for the most part ignoble, they resorted to measures often base in the extreme, and secured as their agents men of high station and of low. Their amazing success in the achievement of their political aims, reached under Agrippina II the point of a virtual *consortium imperii*.

In the second place, we conclude that in social life of a public character, including the public feasts, and games, and stage plays, women of high birth played an important part as spectators, and as sponsors, and sometimes even as performers.

Finally, we have found in our sources that the references to women in the religious life of the state indicate that, in the main, they adhered to the time-honored traditions, and in this way supported the policy of Augustus, whose purpose it was to unify the Empire by a revival of old beliefs. Furthermore, they not only encouraged emperor worship, and personally performed religious duties in the capacity of priestesses, but, in some instances, they themselves became objects of worship and veneration.

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